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Baby Steps

ベイビーステップ

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表紙の絵を描くために水彩絵の具を
かなり久し振りに出したら、何色かチューブが
固まっていた。そして、久し振りすぎて
完成までにいつもの3倍くらい時間がかかった。
アクリル絵の具やカラーインクとかも
使っていきたい。デジタル塗りは‥‥。
まずは、パソコンをどうにかしなきゃな‥‥。

勝木 光

勝木 光

SHONEN
MAGAZINE
COMICS

21

Baby Steps
ベイビーステップ

KC MAGAZINE

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Baby Steps

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21

Baby Steps
ベイビーステップ

人物紹介

エーちゃん
丸尾栄一郎

STC所属。「次の全日本ジュニアで優勝、そしてプロへ」が命題。そこで優勝できなければプロを諦めるという条件付きで、テニス最優先の生活を送っている。同じ夢を持つナツは心の支え。ナツとの交際がテニスに好影響!?

ナツ
鷹崎奈津

STC所属。全国トップレベルの選手でプロ志望。理論派。エーちゃんとは真逆の超感覚派で、それが互いの刺激に。ただいま恋もテニスも絶好調!!

佐々木梅子

エーちゃんの試合に必ず駆けつけてくれる心強い応援団。梅子はエーちゃんへの想い実らず失恋。

影山小次郎

梅子はエーちゃんへの想い実らず失恋。影山は教え上手。

青井コーチ

STCでのエーちゃんのコーチ。元プロ選手という経験に裏付けされた指導でエーちゃんをサポート

清水亜希

コーチである母親と二人三脚でプロを目指す。ジュニア日本一の選手で、エーちゃんに淡い恋心!?

関東ジュニアの覇者!!
その勢いのまま全日本へ!

ラブラブ全開♪

全日本ジュニア

各都道府県から勝ち上がった強豪64名が出場。優勝者には、日本のプロが総結集する全日本選手権の出場権が与えられる。

Baby Steps

CONTENTS

#192: First Time

#193: Negative

#194: Power of Imagination

#195: Rising Flat

#196: Expected Unexpectedness

#197: Temporary Gallon

#198: How to Use the Court

#199: Win by Strategy

#200: High Return

#201: Uneasiness

to Giant Strides

#192: FIRST TIME

ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR TENNIS COMPETITION
男子シングルス
男子ダブルス

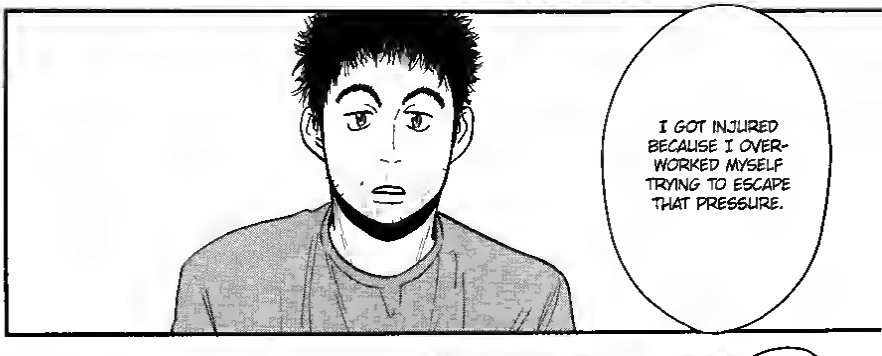
All-Japan
Junior Competition
–
Day 1.

ORDER OF PLAY
稲田大学

...
FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE START OF THE FIRST ROUND.
ARGH ...
I'VE BEEN TRYING EVERYTHING I CAN,
LIKE THINKING OF GOOD MEMORIES AND WRITING DOWN MY SOURCES OF STRESS..
WELL, NO WORRIES. THIS IS PRETTY COMMON.
I WONDER WHY... MAYBE I'M A LOT MORE NERVOUS THAN I THOUGHT.
Did I warm-up too much?
PROBABLY.. THOSE ARE CLASSIC SIGNS OF STRESS.
HEY, HEY. ARE YOU OKAY?

comes from my motivation to win
does not lead to victory
Power-lessness
Anger
Pressure
Challenge
REMEMBER THAT "PRESSURE" IS THE STEP RIGHT BEFORE THE IDEAL MENTAL CONDITION
BUT THE REASON YOU CAN'T MOVE ONTO THE NEXT STEP,
IS BECAUSE THIS IS YOUR FIRST TIME PLAYING IN THE NATIONALS
YES... AT LEAST IN MY HEAD
It's 9 AM. Players, please go to your designated court and start warming up.
EVERYONE IS ALWAYS AFRAID OF THE UN-KNOWN
THEN WHAT SHOULD I DO?

JUST SO YOU KNOW, THIS IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE CONSTANT PRESSURES YOU WILL BE FACING IF YOU BECOME A PRO.
YOU JUST HAVE TO DO IT!


I GOT INJURED BECAUSE I OVER-WORKED MYSELF TRYING TO ESCAPE THAT PRESSURE.

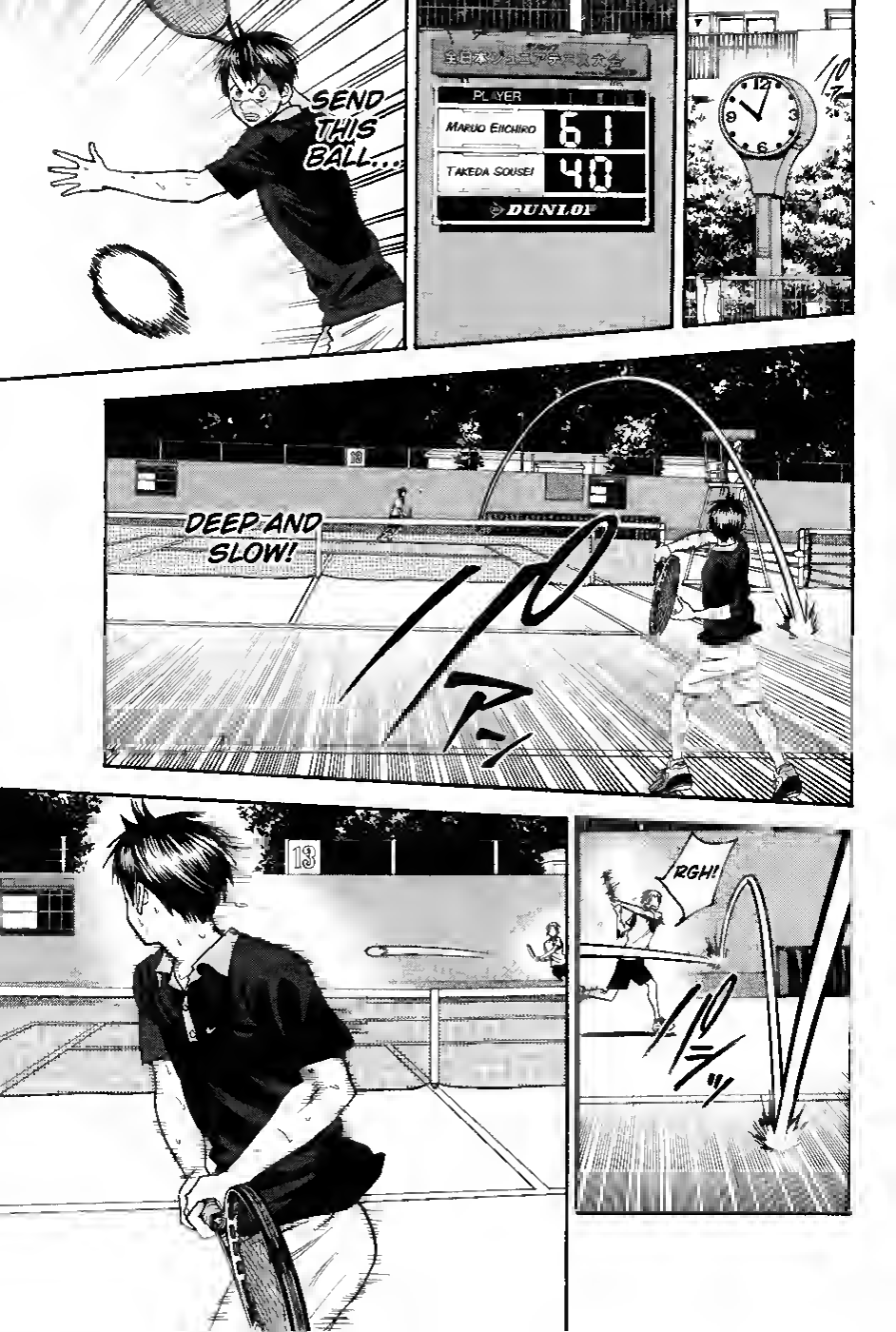
I WAS UNDER CONSTANT REGRET BACK THEN.
BUT EVER SINCE I BECAME A COACH AND STARTED INSTRUCTING YOU,
I'VE BEEN DOING MY BEST NOT TO MAKE YOU GO THROUGH THE SAME THING.
I DID MY BEST, AND YOU ALSO GAVE YOUR 100%.

COACH AOI...
I AM GLAD THAT YOU WERE MY FIRST STUDENT.
It ain't funny
PLEASE DON'T SAY STUFF LIKE THIS IS THE END.
...YEAH!
EI-CHAN, YOU'LL BE OKAY!
YES, SIR!
HA HA HA
GO GET THEM TIGER!

NOW, WE WILL COMMENCE THE FIRST ROUND OF ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR.
ON THE RIGHT, IT'S NO. 35, MARUO EIICHIRO FROM STC.
ON THE REFEREE'S LEFT, IT'S NO. 36, TAKEDA SOUSEI FROM KOUNANN HIGH SCHOOL.
THIS WILL BE A THREE SET MATCH.
BASED ON THE COIN TOSS, MARUO GETS THE FIRST SERVE.

IT'S MY FIRST NATIONALS, AND AN OPPONENT I'VE NEVER MET. NO WONDER I'M SCARED.
BUT I HAVE TO DO THIS... I JUST HAVE TO GET USED TO IT.
ドク
ドク
ドク
HERE GOES!!!
ポン
ポン
ポン

HIT AS MANY SHOTS AS POSSIBLE UNTIL I GET USED TO THIS...
0 - 15.
AKI... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HURRY UP. WE STILL NEED TO REGISTER.
AH... YES.
GEEZ... WHAT IS SHE THINKING?


SEND THIS BALL...
PLAYER
MARUO EIICHIRO
6 1
TAKEDA SOUSEI
4 0
DUNLOP
DEEP AND SLOW!
13
RGH!

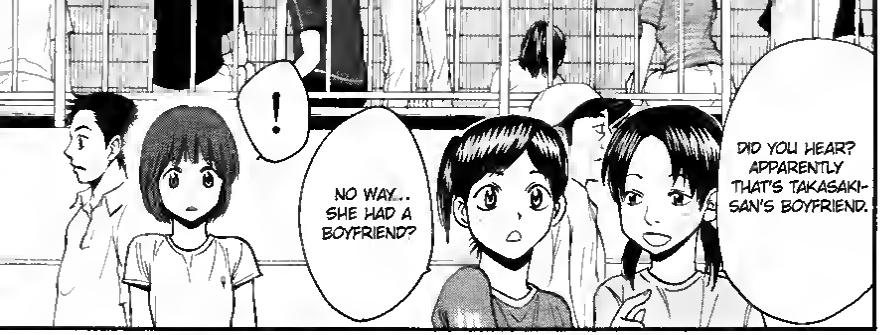
HA!
GAME, MARUO. COUNT: 2 - 0. SECOND SET.
YES!!!

I GOT A BREAK AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND SET!
IT'S NOT GOING COMPLETELY AS I PLANNED, BUT I'M FEELING A LOT BETTER.
BUT DON'T RAISE THE STAKES JUST YET... PLAY SAFE!
SHIT... HIS SHOTS ARE TRICKY AND THEY NEVER MISS... THIS IS TOUGH.
AH.
10
.....

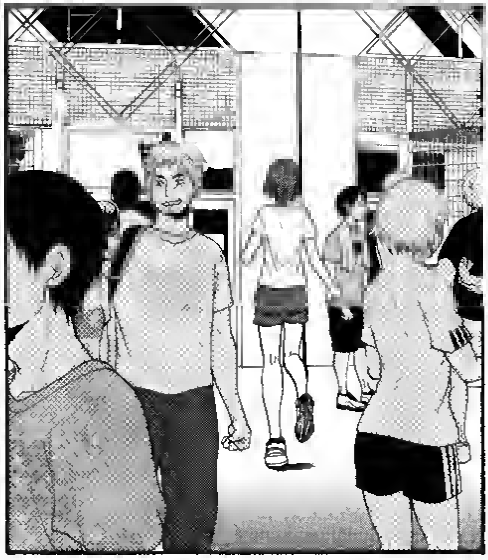
OFFICE
NO. 35, MARUO EIICHIROU,
WON WITH 6-4 6-0!
NO.1, SHIMIZU AKI, WON WITH 6-4 6-0.
YES. I WON THE FIRST ROUND!!!
OKAY, GOOD WORK.

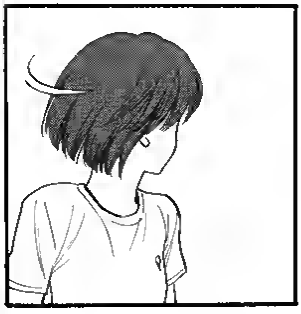
AH...
SHIMIZU-
SAN!
M-MARUO
-KUN!!!
WHAT A
COINCIDENCE.
WE BOTH
FINISHED AT
THE SAME
TIME WITH THE
SAME SCORE.
HUH?
AH!
Y-YOU'RE
RIGHT.
WOW...
TO MEET
ACCIDENTALLY
THREE TIMES
CENTER
COURT
No. 1
No. 2
No. 3
Start
at 9 00
FOLLOWED o
FOLLOWED by
BYE
THEN~
AH!
HE'S
GONE...

NACCHAN, TAKE THE LEAD!

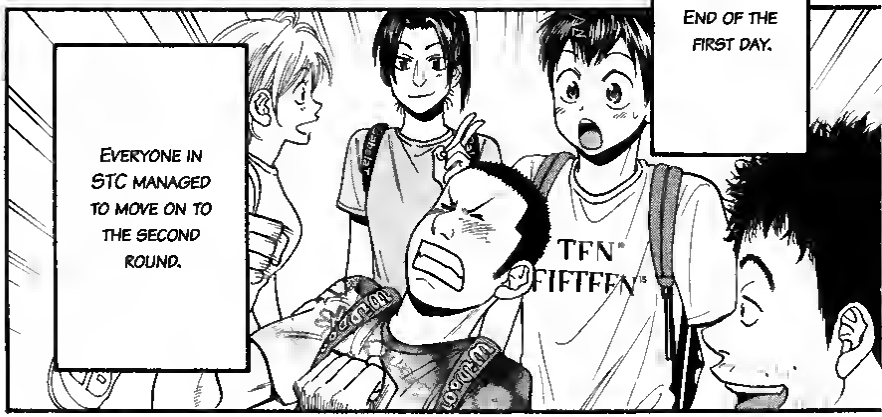

!
NO WAY... SHE HAD A BOYFRIEND?
DID YOU HEAR? APPARENTLY THAT'S TAKASAKI-SAN'S BOYFRIEND.

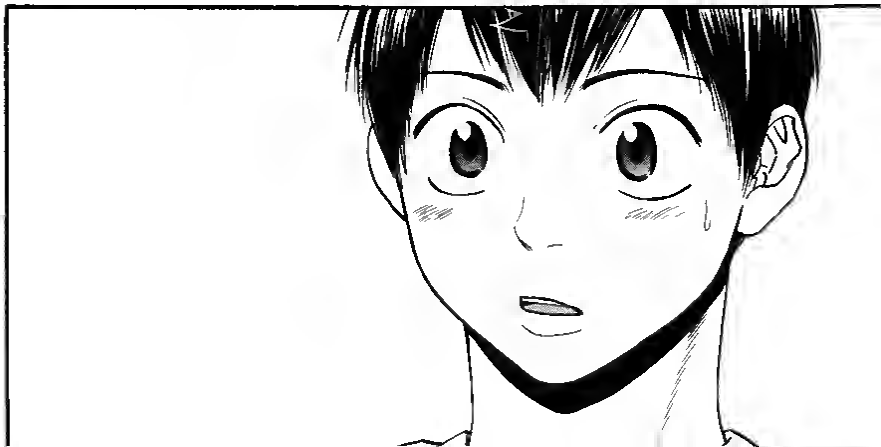
.....



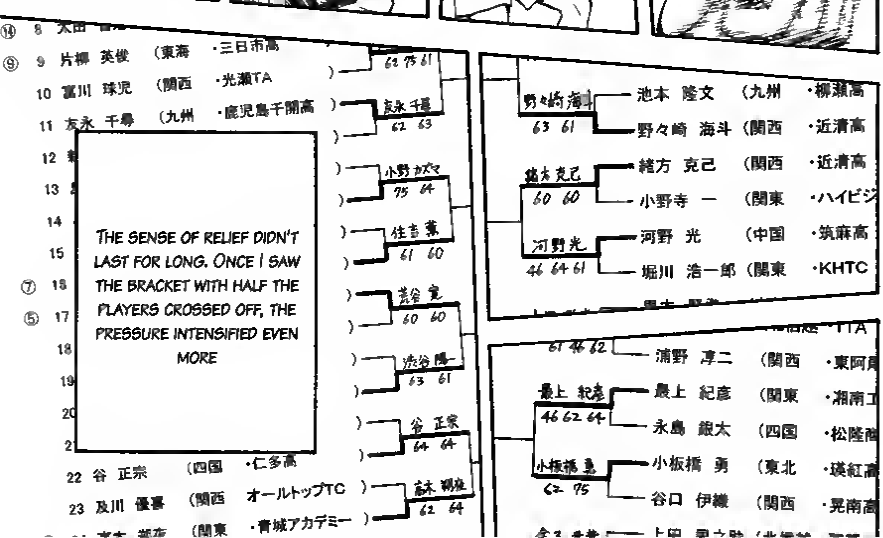


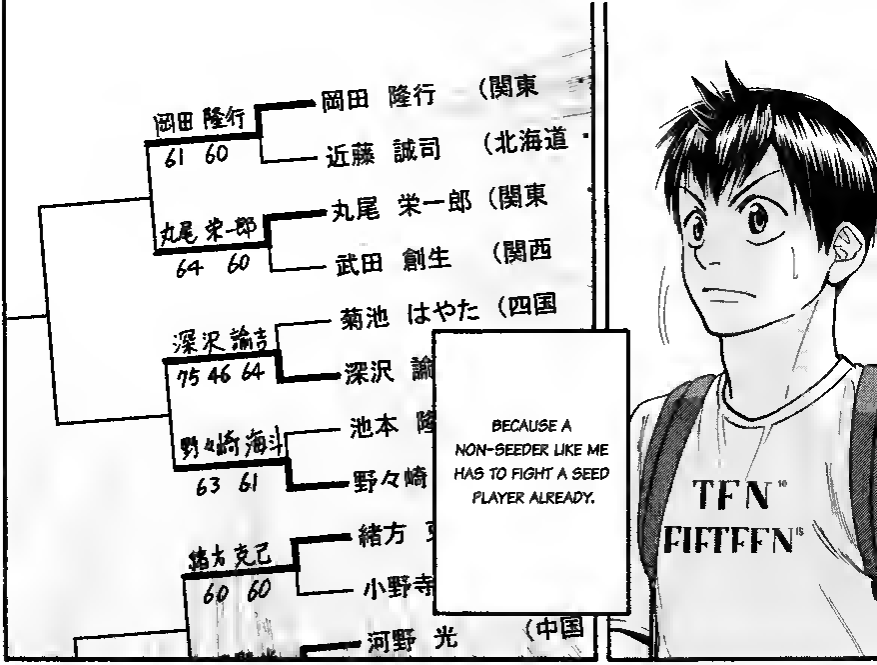
END OF THE FIRST DAY.





② KANDA HISASHI
6－1 6－0
① NABAE YUU
6－4 6－1
ALL THE TOP SEEDERS ALSO MOVED ON TO THE SECOND ROUND WITHOUT ANY UPSETS.
⑥ TAIRA HIROKI
7－5 6－1
⑤ ARAYA HIROSHI
6－0 6－0
④ HIROSE KOUDAI
6－2 6－1
③ OKADA TAKASAKI
6－1 6－0


⑩ 8
⑨ 9 片柳 英俊 （東海 ・三日市高
10 富川 琢児 （関西 ・光瀬TA
11 友永 千尋 （九州 ・鹿児島千開高
12
13
14
15
⑦ 16
⑤ 17
18
19
20
2
22 谷 正宗 （四国 ・仁多高
23 及川 優喜 （関西 オールトップTC
（関東 ・青城アカデミー
THE SENSE OF RELIEF DIDN'T LAST FOR LONG. ONCE I SAW THE BRACKET WITH HALF THE PLAYERS CROSSED OFF, THE PRESSURE INTENSIFIED EVEN MORE
62 75 61
友永 千尋
62 63
小野 カズマ
75 64
住吉 薫
61 60
英谷 宏
60 60
渋谷 陽
63 61
谷 正宗
64 64
池本 隆文 （九州 ・柳瀬高
野々崎 海斗 （関西 ・近清高
63 61
緒方 克己 （関西 ・近清高
60 60
小野寺 一 （関東 ・ハイビジ
河野 光 （中国 ・筑麻高
46 64 61
堀川 浩一郎 （関東 ・KHTC
61 46 62
浦野 淳二 （関西 ・東阿
最上 紀彦 （関東 ・湘南工
46 62 64
永島 銀太 （四国 ・松隆商
小板橋 勇 （東北 ・琪紅高
62 75
谷口 伊織 （関西 ・晃南高


岡田 隆行
61 60
岡田 隆行 (関東
近藤 誠司 (北海道
丸尾 栄一郎
64 60
丸尾 栄一郎 (関東
武田 創生 (関西
深沢 諭吉
75 46 64
菊池 はやた (四国
深沢 諭
野々崎 海斗
63 61
池本 陸
野々崎
緒方 克己
60 60
緒方
小野寺
河野 光 (中国
BECAUSE A NON-SEEDER LIKE ME HAS TO FIGHT A SEED PLAYER ALREADY.
TEN
FIFTEEN

ALTHOUGH MY OPPONENT IS IN KANTO'S BEST 4 LIKE ME, HE IS NO.3 IN THE ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR RANKING. OKADA-KUN.

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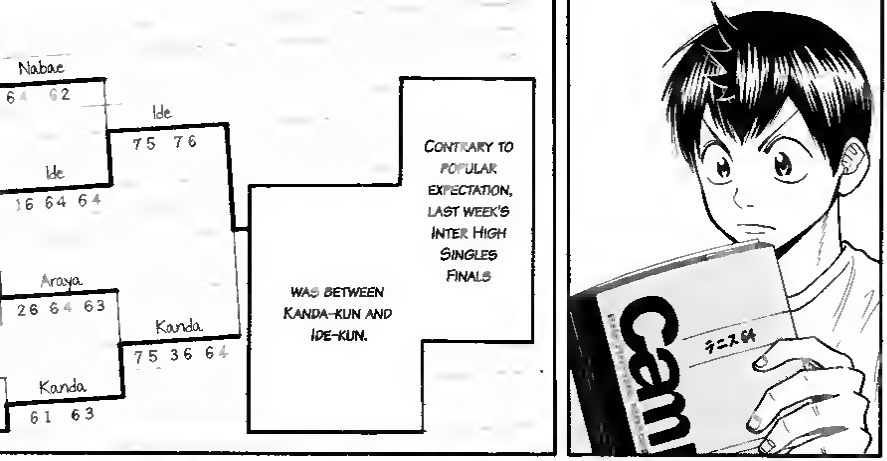
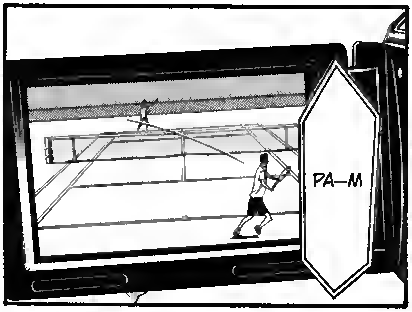
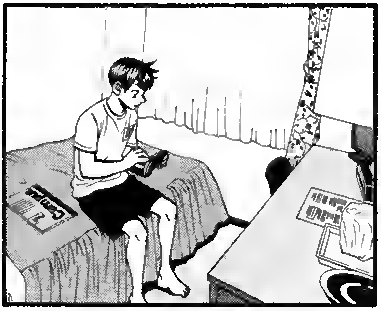


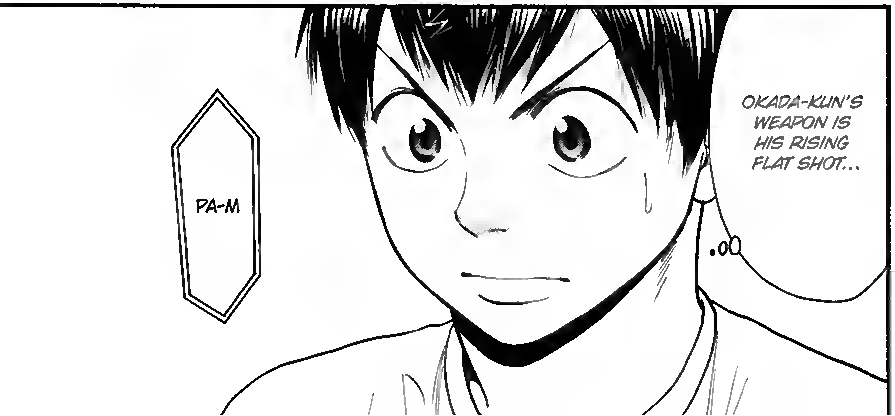
#193: NEGATIVE

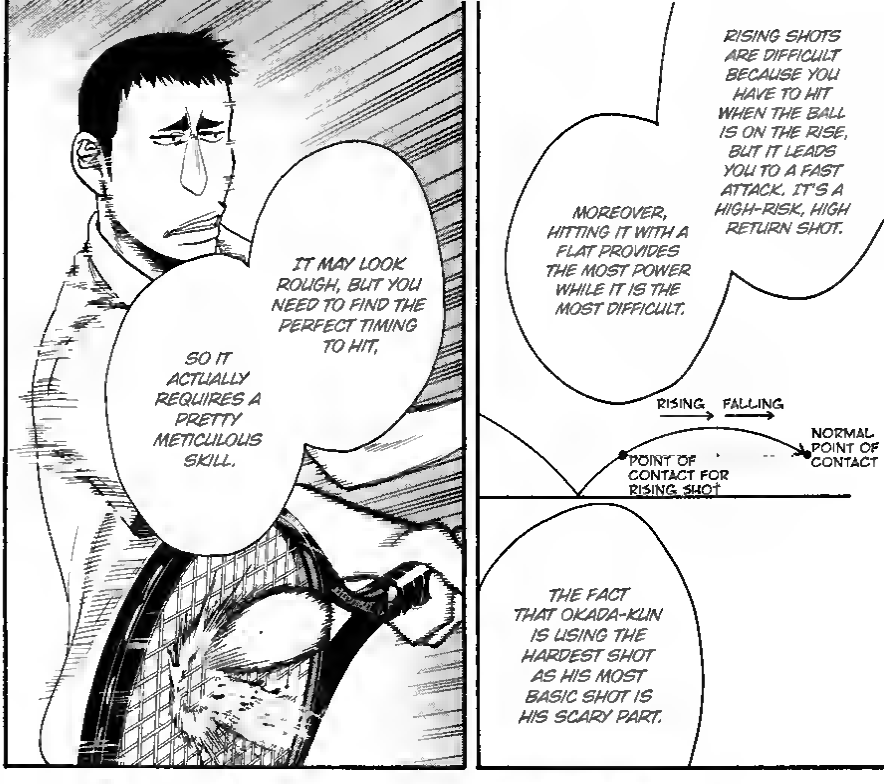
But apparently, it was an incredible match.
Nabae-kun lost to Ide-kun at the semi-finals.
Although Kanda-kun saw Nabae-kun's absence in the finals as his opportunity to win, he had to be satisfied with 2nd place.
Is Araya-kun He is also the one who told me the results of Inter-High.
Likewise, the one who lost at the semi-finals against Kanda-kun
That's why if I were to play against Ide I would like to avoid a close match at all costs
In order to win I need to dominate him from the very beginning
Listening to that reminded me of the time Nabae-kun told me about Ide-kun's greatest strength
I don't know the exact details, but it ended with a really close tie breaker.
And the one who lost to this incredible Ide-kun in the quarter finals,
Kanda might be stronger than Nabae right now
I'm thankful to him for providing me with information on Kanda-kun while infuriated with anger,
and his last words were quite striking

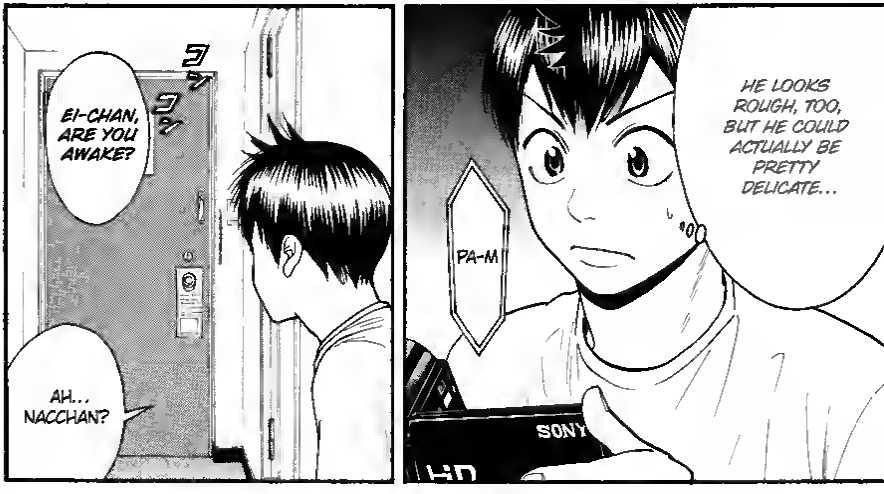
He is 185 cm tall, and although he stopped at Top 4 in Kanto Junior just like me,
he was Top 4 for All-Japan Junior Indoor Selectional, and last year, Top 4 in Inter-High and Top 8 in All-Japan Junior. He has maintained a solid track record...
is my opponent tomorrow. Okada-kun.


PA—M




PA-M
Okada-kun's weapon is his rising flat shot...


IT MAY LOOK ROUGH, BUT YOU NEED TO FIND THE PERFECT TIMING TO HIT.
SO IT ACTUALLY REQUIRES A PRETTY METICULOUS SKILL.
RISING SHOTS ARE DIFFICULT BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO HIT WHEN THE BALL IS ON THE RISE, BUT IT LEADS YOU TO A FAST ATTACK. IT'S A HIGH-RISK, HIGH RETURN SHOT.
MOREOVER, HITTING IT WITH A FLAT PROVIDES THE MOST POWER WHILE IT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT.
RISING
FALLING
NORMAL POINT OF CONTACT
POINT OF CONTACT FOR RISING SHOT
THE FACT THAT OKADA-KUN IS USING THE HARDEST SHOT AS HIS MOST BASIC SHOT IS HIS SCARY PART.


EI-CHAN, ARE YOU AWAKE?
AH... NACCHAN?
PA-M
HE LOOKS ROUGH, TOO, BUT HE COULD ACTUALLY BE PRETTY DELICATE...
SONY

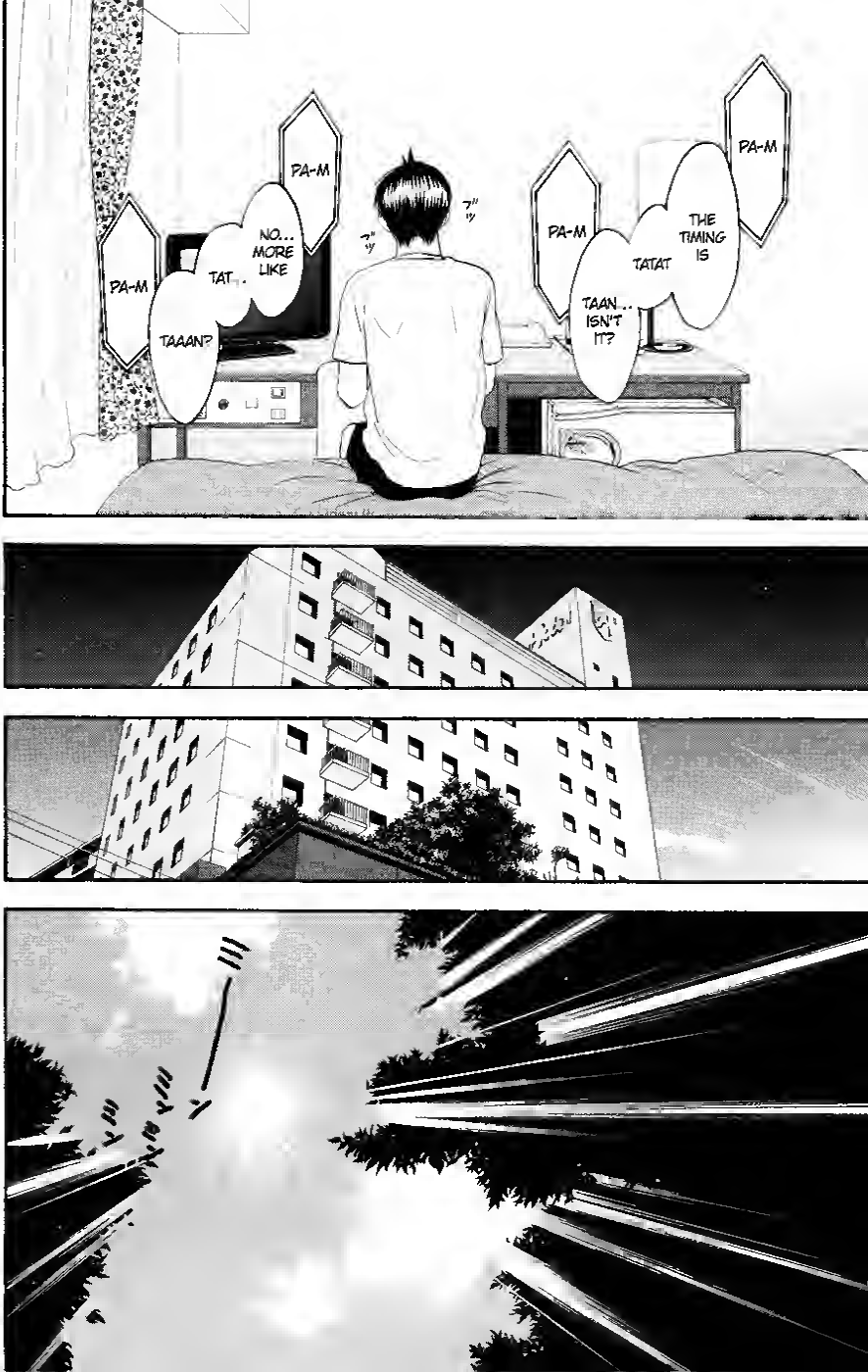
I'm coming in~
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I WAS WATCHING THE VIDEO AOI-SAN TOOK
OH, ARE YOU BUSY RIGHT NOW?
N-NAH, IT'S FINE.
THANK YOU FOR CHEERING FOR ME TODAY.
HUH. ? WHAT IS THIS SITUATION? IS THIS OKAY?
YOU HAD AN INCREDIBLE FACE BEFORE THE MATCH~
I SHOULD BE FINE FOR TOMORROW.
O-OHH, NO PROBLEM. I WAS PRETTY NERVOUS TODAY, BUT I MANAGED TO FINISH EARLY SO...

I MIGHT BE PLAYING IN FRONT OF MY PARENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME
SINCE THEY NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO WATCH,
IF I CAN WIN TOMORROW...
AND MY PARENTS ARE COMING TO WATCH FROM THE DAY AFTER...
YUP.
THEN YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE
?
MM MM...
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, WHY DON'T YOUR PARENTS EVER COME TO WATCH?
HMM ..
THEY USED TO COME ALL THE TIME WHEN I WAS LITTLE...

FOCUS !!!
AND I WAS AT A BIT OF A SLUMP BACK THEN, TOO...
THIS IS IT!
NATSU!!!
BUT I GOT REALLY EMBARRASSED BY MY DAD CHEERING FOR ME OUT LOUD WHEN I WAS IN 6TH GRADE,
... I ENDED UP YELLING AT HIM...
DON'T COME ANYMORE!!
BUT I ALWAYS TELL THEM THE RESULTS AND THEY'RE STILL VERY SUPPORTIVE...
YUP...
HUH...? THAT'S WHY THEY NEVER COME?

MAYBE I SHOULD ASK THEM TO COME, TOO...
MY DAD'S PRETTY STUBBORN, YOU KNOW. HE'S SORT OF LIKE EI-CHAN
HUH? I'M STUBBORN?
SOMETIMES YOU ARE.
... OKAY
YOU SHOULD! THEY'LL BE DELIGHTED!!!
THEN I'LL GO MAKE A CALL RIGHT NOW.

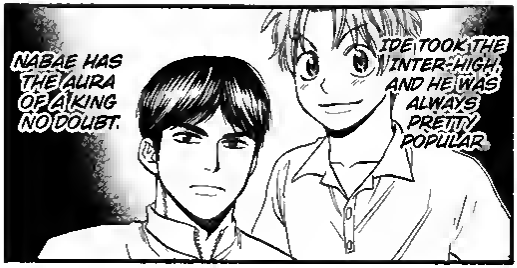
GOOD NIGHT.
YEAH!
LET'S DO OUR BEST TOMORROW!!!
PA-M
PA-M
SONY

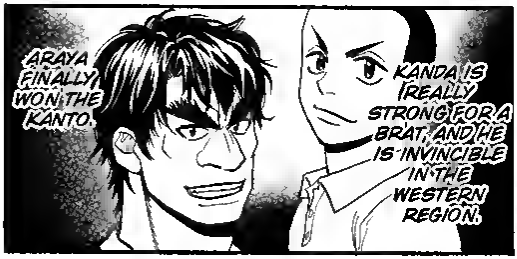

PA-M
NO... MORE LIKE
TAT..
PA-M
TAAAN?
7"
"
7"
"
PA-M
TATAT
THE TIMING IS
PA-M
TAAN... ISN'T IT?

ザワ
ザワ
ザワ
ザワ
ザワ
All-Japan Junior, Day 2. Right before the match.

OH? ISN'T THAT THE 3RD SEED, OKADA?
IS HE TRYING TO CONCENTRATE ON HIS OWN?
OKADA'S PRETTY SCARY AND A BIT UNAPPROACHABLE.
I THINK HIS SOLITARY ATMOSPHERE IS ONE OF THE SECRETS TO HIS STRENGTH.
ALTHOUGH HE SEEMS TO BE PRETTY CLOSE TO IDE.
YESTER DAY
HEY, DO YOU THINK NABAE HAS A CHANCE FOR A SECOND TITLE?

IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN IT'LL BE KANDA WHO BEAT ARAYA IN INTER-HIGH.
THEN ARAYA SINCE HE BEAT NABAE AT KANTO?
BUT HASN'T NABAE BEEN LOSING RECENTLY?
ALSO, THERE'S... OKABE.
OKABE? WHO?
HUH?
I WOULD'VE LOVED TO SEE HIM PLAY HERE
WHY ISN'T IDE PLAYING EVEN THOUGH HE WON INTER-HIGH?
I HEARD THE FOURTH SEED HIROSE FROM KYUSHU IS PRETTY STRONG.
WHO ELSE IS A STRONG CANDIDATE?
OH! IT'S OKADA. OKADA.
AH, RIGHT. THERE WAS OKADA IN THE 3RD SEED.
He is pretty strong, too!
.....


NABAE HAS THE AURA OF A KING NO DOUBT.
IDE TOOK THE INTER-HIGH, AND HE WAS ALWAYS PRETTY POPULAR.


ARAYA FINALLY WON THE KANTO.
KANDA IS REALLY STRONG FOR A BRAT, AND HE IS INVINCIBLE IN THE WESTERN REGION.

ガッ
ビクッ

WINNING A TITLE IS A MUST FOR MAKING AN IMPRESSION. THIS IS THE SAME FOR A PRO.
THE REASON I DON'T STAND OUT IS BECAUSE I NEVER FINISH NO. 1.

MY OPPONENT IS THAT CREEPY DUDE WHO IS CONSIDERED THE EYE OF THE STORM BY SOME...
THAT'S WHY I CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE HERE AT JUST THE SECOND ROUND. BUT...

IF HE CAN MIX AN INFINITE NUMBER OF DIFFERENT PATTERNS INTO THAT TENNIS...
IF IT'S HIM, THERE'S ALSO A POSSIBILITY THAT HE MASTERED A POWERFUL WEAPON IN THIS SHORT TIME.
... NOT ONLY THAT, THE HIGHLY VOLATILE PACE OF HIS TENNIS COULD TURN OUT TO BE A BAD MATCH FOR MY FLAT...
HE HAS THE MENTAL STRENGTH TO BEAT IDE IN A CLOSE MATCH, AND HIS SKILLS ARE EVOLVING EVERY MATCH
THIS MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE A CLOSE MATCH, TOO, AND HIS TECHNIQUES MUST HAVE IMPROVED A LOT AGAIN.
I'VE SEEN WITH MY OWN EYES THAT HE DIDN'T BEAT IDE AND THREATENED NABAE WITH JUST A FLUKE.

I NEED TO THINK OF ALL THE WORST POSSIBLE OUTCOMES
SO I CAN DEAL WITH ANY SITUATION I FACE

ANYTHING ELSE? SOMETHING EVEN WORSE THAN THIS WORST-CASE SCENARIO...

I WILL OVERHAUL MY CURRENT REPUTATION BY WINNING THIS FINAL BIG TITLE!!!
くわっ
I'M FEELING A LOT BETTER AFTER THAT MATCH YESTERDAY.
タッ
タッ

I GATHERED ALL THE DATA I CAN AND CAME UP WITH PLENTY OF STRATEGIES. ALL THAT'S LEFT IS TO BELIEVE IN MYSELF.
I'LL DEFINITELY WIN!!!
OH, MARUO-KUN!
HEY-- WHAT'S UP?
HUH? IDE-KUN, WHY'RE YOU HERE?
NO WAY, YOU CAME ALL THE WAY HERE TO WATCH?
those are a lot bags you have
HMM, WELL, IT'S HALF-AND-HALF.
I'M GOING TO BE STUDYING ABROAD STARTING TODAY.

THAT'S RIGHT. YOU ARE PLAYING AGAINST OKADA TODAY
OKADA'S SUPER NEGATIVE THESE DAYS, YOU KNOW~
IT WAS A LAST-MINUTE DECISION, SO THE ONLY TICKETS I COULD FIND WERE FROM KANSAI AIRPORT.
Cause it's summer vacation
SINCE I'M ALREADY HERE, I WANTED TO WATCH EVERYONE PLAY, TOO.
WHAT?!
WHAT?!
わく
わく
AND OKADA'S SUPER STRONG WHEN HE'S SUPER NEGATIVE.
GIVE ME A MATCH EVEN MORE AWESOME THAN THE ONE WE PLAYED.

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IT'S 10 AM.
ALL PLAYERS, PLEASE GO TO YOUR DESIGNATED COURT AND START WARMING UP.
#194: POWER OF IMAGINATION
YES, SIR.
ALRIGHT, IT'S TIME!
STC
prince

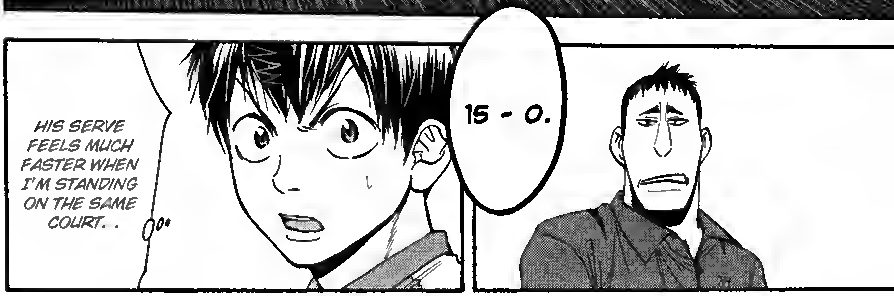
Bu-dump
Bu-dump
EVEN THE NATION'S NO. 3 IS BETTING HIS FUTURE ON THIS TOURNAMENT...
HE SAID HE WILL BECOME A PRO IF HE WINS THE TOURNAMENT, AND GO TO COLLEGE IF HE LOSES.
SO HE HAS HIGH HOPES FOR THIS ONE.
Bu-dump
Bu-dump
EVERY PLAYER HERE HAS SOMETHING THEY'RE FIGHTING FOR.
Bu-dump
BEATING PLAYERS LIKE THEM IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS GETTING ACKNOWLEDGED AS A PROFESSIONAL PLAYER!

NOW, WE WILL COMMENCE THE SECOND ROUND OF ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR TENNIS COMPETITION.
THREE SET MATCH. OKADA, SERVICE PLAY!
LET'S HAVE A GOOD MATCH...
Mumble
LET'S HAVE A GOOD MATCH!

mumble
mumble
I DON'T KNOW WHY...
...BUT I REALLY DON'T WANT TO LOSE TO YOU.

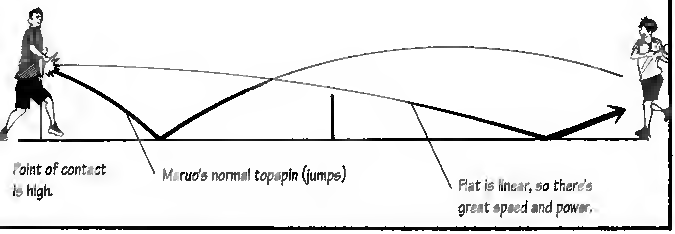
...GH!

RISING FLAT SHOT!!!


15 - 0.
HIS SERVE FEELS MUCH FASTER WHEN I'M STANDING ON THE SAME COURT. .

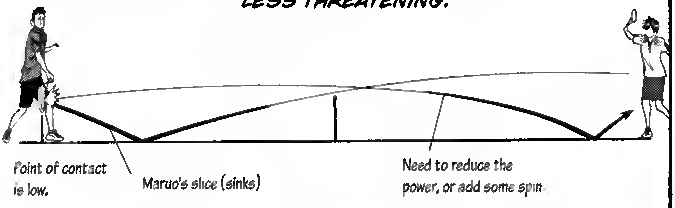
THERE ARE SLIGHT DIFFERENCES IN TIMING FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN IN THE VIDEO AND ACTUALLY SEEING THEM WITH MY OWN EYES
HIS TEMPO IS A BIT FASTER, AND THE BALL ITSELF SEEMS PRETTY STRONG .
IF I REACT EVEN A LITTLE BIT SLOWER, I'LL GET TORN TO PIECES BY THAT RISING FLAT SHOT...

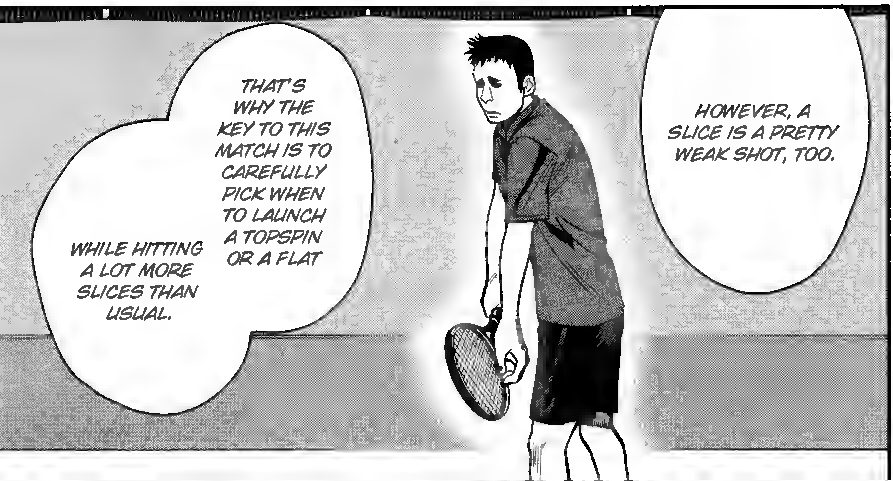
OKADA-KUN IS TALL, SO HIS POINT OF CONTACT IS QUITE HIGH. THIS MAKES HIS RISING FLAT SHOT HAVE A MORE LINEAR TRAJECTORY WHICH MAXIMIZES ITS POWER AND SPEED.



BUT... THIS MAKES UP FOR A MAJORITY OF HIS SHOTS, SO I CAN STRATEGIZE A FAIR AMOUNT.

BUT IF I HIT A VERY LOW SLICE, HE WILL BE FORCED TO LOWER HIS POINT OF CONTACT. THIS FORCES HIM TO EITHER ADD SOME SPIN, OR REDUCE ITS SPEED, MAKING IT MUCH LESS THREATENING.

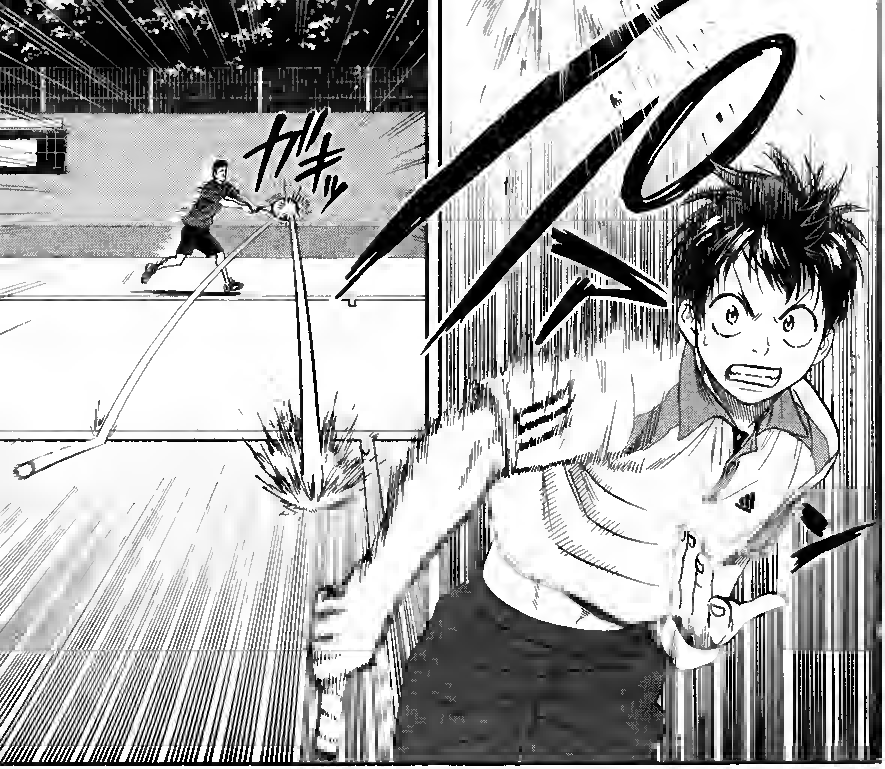



WHILE HITTING A LOT MORE SLICES THAN USUAL.
THAT'S WHY THE KEY TO THIS MATCH IS TO CAREFULLY PICK WHEN TO LAUNCH A TOPSPIN OR A FLAT
HOWEVER, A SLICE IS A PRETTY WEAK SHOT, TOO.

IN ORDER TO EXECUTE THIS PLAN...
I NEED TO HIT THESE BACK AS DEEP AS POSSIBLE DURING MY RETURN GAME,
AND TUNE THE SLIGHT DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MY DATA AND WHAT I ACTUALLY SEE!!!
RGH!

30 - 0.

GAME, OKADA. 1 - 0.
OUT.
I NEED TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO GET SUCKED INTO HIS FAST TEMPO.
CRAP.. I CAN'T HELP GETTING DOMINATED BY HIS SHOTS, BUT I SHOULDN'T BE THE ONE MAKING MISTAKES..
I WILL LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES...
AND DEFINITELY KEEP THIS SERVICE GAME!!!
CONCENTRATE.. IT'S NO GOOD IF I GET AGITATED WHEN I'M ALREADY IN A TOUGH SITUATION.


ガキッ

YES!
adidas

15 - 0.

STAY CONFIDENT...
MY SERVE CAN COMPETE IN THE NATIONAL LEVEL!!!
I SCORED WITH MY SERVE!
EVEN THOUGH IT DIDN'T WORK AGAINST IKE-KUN, IT WORKS AGAINST OKADA-KUN.
NICE SERVES..
Tch

A SLICE!

IT'S COMING STRAIGHT BACK FROM ONLY A FEW INCHES ABOVE THE NET...
A HIGH-LOOPING SHOT DOWN THE LINE RIGHT AFTER A SLIDING CROSS SHOT.. I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO BREAK THE TEMPO EVEN IF I KNOW IT.
AND RETURN THIS ON THE RISE...

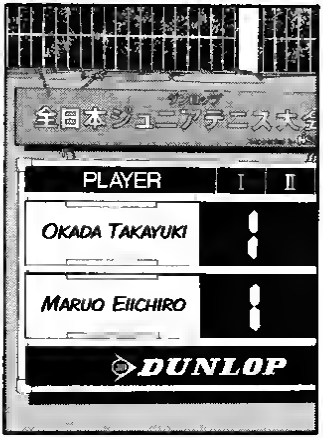
WITH A HIGH-SPEED TOP SPIN!!!!

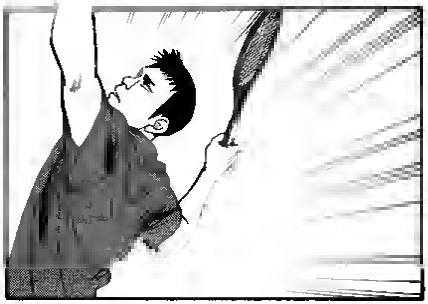
Tch.
30 - 0.
YES!!!
I'D SAY THE OVERALL STRENGTH AND STABILITY OF HIS SHOTS HAVE GOTTEN UP BY A LEVEL.
HE'S DIFFERENT FROM THE TIME HE FOUGHT ARAYA OR NABAE AGAIN ..

HA!
AND FOR HIS FIRST DEBUT AT THE NATIONAL STAGE, HE LOOKS PRETTY CALM AND FOCUSED ..

GAME, MARUO. 1 - 1.
YES!!!
YES .. YES! YES!
I KEPT MY GAME AGAINST THE NO. 3 IN THE NATION USING MY OWN STYLE!
I DEFINITELY IMPROVED A LOT OVER THE LAST THREE WEEKS!
THE REASON I CAN MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF CONCENTRATION IN MY RALLIES
IS BECAUSE ALL THE THINGS I LEARNED ARE EMBEDDED DEEP IN MY BODY
AND SINCE THAT'S THE CASE, I CAN CARRY SOME RISKS IN MY RETURN GAME!!!

15
THIS IS NO JOKE. DAMN IT...
Mumble
mumble
STC
HE SEEMS TO HAVE A HECK TON OF DIFFERENT PATTERNS. BUT THAT'S HIS STRONGEST WEAPON...
Mumble mumble
WELL... IT'S NOT LIKE HIS STYLE IS ABSOLUTELY THE WORST MATCH FOR MY TENNIS...
IF THAT'S THE CASE... IT'S NOT AS BAD AS MY WORST CASE SCENARIO.
Mumble mumble





#195: RISING FLAT SHOT

IT WAS A FLAT, AND A PRETTY SHARP ONE...
RGH!
HE WON'T LET ME SCORE WITH JUST THE SERVE...
BUT HE'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO RETURN MY FIRST SERVES WITH PIN-POINT CONTROL...

SLICE!
HE'S AVOIDING MY FLATS BY USING A BUNCH OF SLICES..
BUT THEY ARE NOT SHARP ENOUGH TO SCORE AN ACE..
YOUR TACTICS, STROKES, AND CHANGE OF PACE ARE ALL PRETTY GOOD, BUT THEY ARE NOWHERE CLOSE TO MY WORST-CASE SCENARIO...
HOW LONG DO YOU THINK I'VE BEEN FIGHTING AGAINST SLICES IN THIS STAGE?

110 KM/H
RGH!
HOW'S THIS SPIN...?!

ドン

IF I'M EVEN A LITTLE BIT WEAK, HE'LL FINISH ME WITH ONE BLOW.
SHOOT.. THERE'S STILL SOME DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN WHAT I EXPECT FROM MY DATA AND WHAT I'M SEEING.
おおっ
15 - 0.
IT'S AMAZ-ING AS I EXPECTED...
THIS IS OKADA-KUN'S RISING FLAT SHOT.
BUT THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO STAND AT THE TOP OF THE NATIONAL STAGE...
I CONGRATULATE YOU ON COMING THIS FAR BY UTILIZ-ING ALL YOUR STRENGTHS.

AS I THOUGHT, YOU DON'T HAVE "IT"...
TATAT... TA!

GAME, OKADA. 2 - 1.
タタッ

IF I LOOK CAREFULLY, THERE ARE TWO TYPES. A FAST FLAT SHOT AND A SUPER-FAST FLAT SHOT.
THERE'S MORE THAN ONE TYPE OF RISING FLAT SHOT.
カチカチ
カチカチ
ハッ
IN GENERAL TERMS, HIS RETURNS ARE SLOWER WHEN THE BALL'S SHALLOW, OR DOESN'T BOUNCE MUCH.
カチ
カチ
THIS ONE IS TATA—N,
AND THIS ONE IS TATTA—N...
ア"ッ
ア"ッ
ア"ッ
TIME!
HE'S ON IT. HE'S ON IT.

パコーン
TATTA—N
TATAT... NO...
全日本ジュニアテニス大会
PLAYER
I
II
III
OKADA TAKAYUKI
2
MARUO EIICHIROU
2
DUNLOP
PLAYER
I
II
OKADA TAKAYUKI
3
MARUO EIICHIROU
2
THIS ONE IS TATA—N!
ER
I
3
3

THIS GUY OKADA IS QUITE INCREDIBLE ..
IT'S PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO HIT A PERFECTLY FLAT SHOT IN TENNIS DUE TO THE NET.
EVEN IF IT'S FLAT, YOU NEED TO ADD A LITTLE BIT OF SPIN TO IT.
IT LOOKS LIKE HE IS PUTTING HIS GREATEST EFFORT ON MINIMIZING THAT SPIN
IS THERE A SPECIAL REASON WHY HE IS ALWAYS GOING FOR SUCH A GAMBLE? IS IT HIS PERSONALITY?
IN OTHER WORDS, HE IS CONTINUOUSLY HITTING THE BEST POSSIBLE SHOT HE CAN AT THAT MOMENT WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE RISKS
WELL, THANKS TO THAT, HE NEEDS TO MAINTAIN HIS SPECIAL RHYTHM, SO HIS STYLE IS QUITE STATIC.
SINCE MARUO NEVER MISSES OUT ON SUCH TRAITS OF HIS OPPONENTS, HE IS USING THAT AS HIS PRIMARY POINT OF ATTACK

TOKA
A STRONG SLICE... GO!
Shyun
!

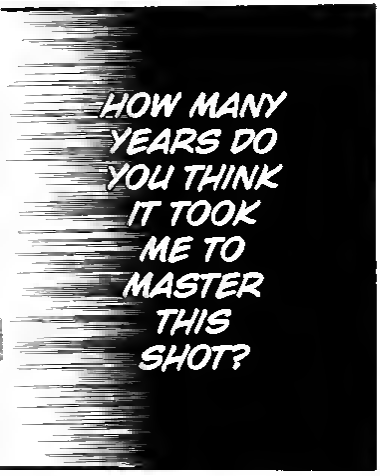
...THIS IS IT!
RGH!
HA!
FRONT!

WILL IT GO OUT?! NO...
OUT!
GAME, OKADA. 4 - 3.

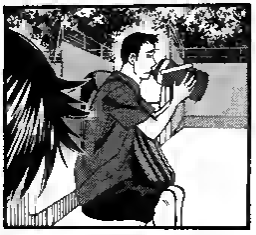
カチ
カチ
カチ
IF I KEEP ON PRO-GRESS-ING LIKE THIS...

SHOOT.. I WAS A BIT OFF BECAUSE I HESITATED.
ｸﾞｯ

BUT THAT WAS GOOD!
I'M START-ING TO GET THE HANG OF IT!


HOW MANY YEARS DO YOU THINK IT TOOK ME TO MASTER THIS SHOT?

IT'S HIS FIRST TIME AT THE NATION-ALS, AND HIS FIRST MATCH
YET HE IS AGAINST ME, STARTING TO COUNTER MY RISING FLAT SHOTS ALREADY..



HEY.. WE'VE ONLY PLAYED SEVEN GAMES YET

SIX YEARS AGO... FLORIDA JUNIOR.
YES!!!
THAT'S IT! GO!!! GO!!!
YOSHI!~~
YOSHI!~~
EVEN THOUGH HIS JUNIOR RANKING IS MORE OR LESS ON THE SAME LEVEL AS ME...
HOW COME HIS MATCHES DRAW PEOPLE IN LIKE THIS?
EVEN THOUGH IT'S HIS FIRST TIME OVER-SEAS . . HE'S INCREDIBLE . .
YOSHI!~~

IS THIS THE "IT" THAT COACH AND THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT?
YOU CAN'T WIN THE ALL-JAPAN IF YOU DON'T HAVE "IT"...
FIGHTING IN THE WORLD STAGE IS OUT OF QUESTION.
I'VE BEEN HONING MY RINSING FLAT SHOT FOR OVER SIX YEARS IN ORDER TO BE THAT SORT OF PLAYER...
I FINALLY CAME THIS FAR...
THAT'S RIGHT... OKABE.
WHO'S OKABE?
HUH?
OKABE?
OH, RIGHT. IT'S OKADA
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I STILL DON'T HAVE "IT"...

SINCE YOU COULDN'T BEAT NABAE OR ARAYA, THERE'S NO WAY YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN THIS ONE.
ALTHOUGH YOU WON AGAINST IDE, THAT WAS STILL SECOND ROUND OF KANTO.
IT WASN'T A BIG STAGE WHERE IDE SHOWS HIS GREATEST STRENGTH.
IN THE FIRST PLACE, THERE'S NO WAY YOU WILL HAVE "IT" WHEN EVEN I STILL DON'T HAVE "IT".
TIME!
ハッ ハッ ハッ

Have...
Have...
Have
not...
not.
Have
not.

Baby Steps

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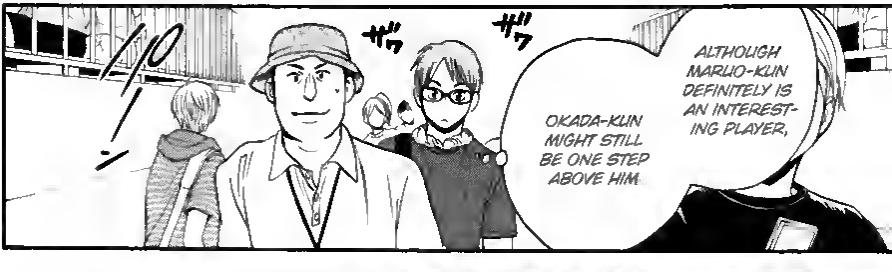
BOTH NABAE-KUN AND ARAYA-KUN
SEEM TO BE IN GOOD SHAPE FOR WINNING THE SECOND ROUND, SO WE ARE DONE HERE.
NO. 13... WHICH MATCH WAS THAT?
THEN LET'S GO CHECK COURT NO. 13.
IS SOMETHING GOING TO HAPPEN?
I WAS TALKING WITH NABAE-KUN YESTERDAY...
THAT ONE IS TODAY'S MUST-SEE MATCH.
OH, IT'S OKADA-KUN..
HIS OPPONENT IS SOMEONE CALLED MARUO FROM KANAGAWA

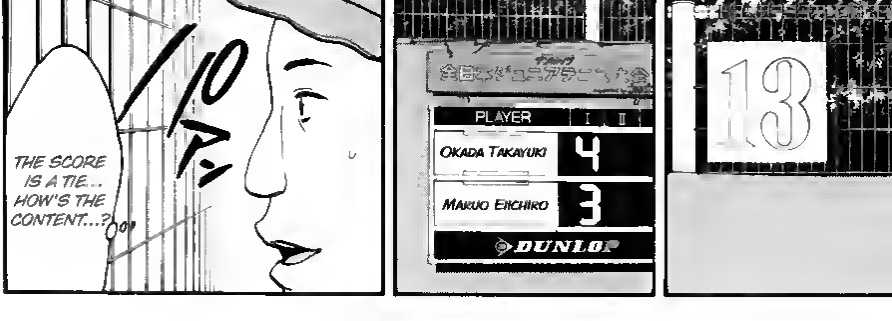
#196: EXPECTED UNEXPECTEDNESS

YESTER-DAY
HEY, NABAE-KUN. CONGRAT-ULATIONS ON WINNING THE FIRST ROUND.
OH, MIYAMOTO-SAN THANK YOU.
WE'RE ALL EXCITED TO SEE YOU WIN IT AGAIN THIS YEAR. WE'LL MAKE YOU A FLASHY HEAD-LINE.
OKAY, I'LL DO MY BEST
BY THE WAY, WHO IS YOUR MOST ANTICIPATED PLAYER THIS YEAR?
..IS THIS AN INTER-VIEW?
NAH, IT'S MORE OF MY PERSONAL INTEREST. IT WILL BE OFF THE RECORD
..BUT I REALLY DON'T HAVE ONE PERSON IN MIND.
THIS IS YEAR IS GOING TO BE EXCEPTIONALLY TOUGH.
COME ON~ I TOLD YOU, THIS IS NOT AN INTERVIEW.
BE HONEST.
HOW ABOUT MARUO-KUN?

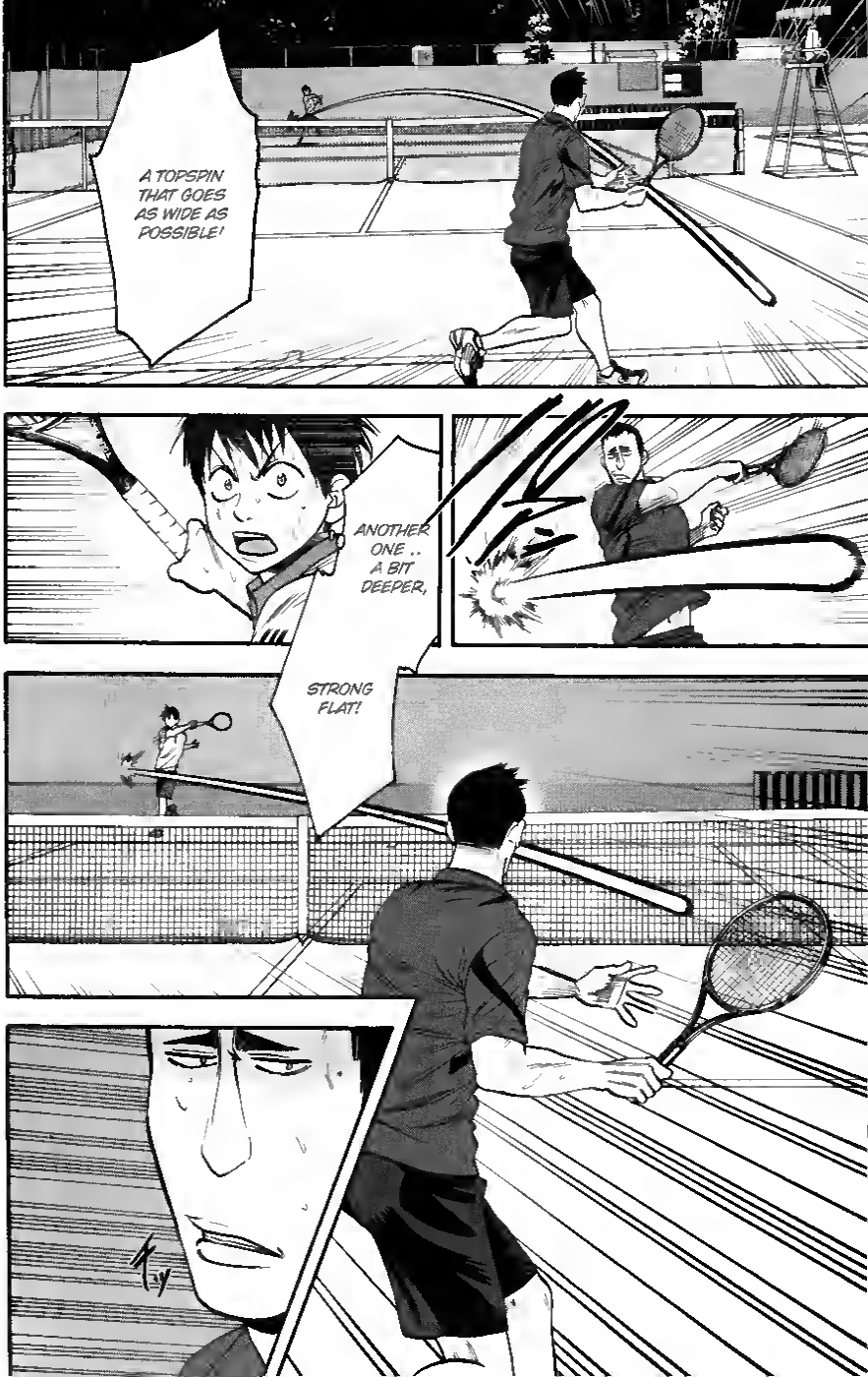
IN THOSE TERMS,
I'M CURIOUS ABOUT OKADA, TOO.
HE IS AN INTRIGUING PLAYER EVEN FOR ME WHO HAS OBSERVED JUNIOR TENNIS FOR A VERY LONG TIME
EVEN THOUGH HIS PERSONALITY AND PLAY STYLE ARE FAIRLY BLAND HIS GROWTH SPEED IS INCREDIBLY FAST
KANTO JUNIOR TOP 4
INTER-HIGH SINGLES
ALTHOUGH OKADA-KUN HASN'T BEEN PERFORMING AS WELL AS HE SHOULD BE IN TERMS OF HIS SKILLS.
OH... WHY'S THAT?
IT'S HARD NOT TO NOTICE THE SIMILARITY
IT'S YAZAWA MIKI THE STRONGEST PLAYER IN JAPAN'S FEMALE TENNIS HISTORY WHO MANAGED TO BREAK INTO TOP 10 IN THE WORLD AND IS STILL AN ACTIVE PLAYER
OKADA HAS A SPECIFIC IMAGE HE IS AIMING FOR.
HE IS ACTUALLY TRYING FOR SOMETHING REALLY DIFFICULT
SOMETHING DIFFICULT?

I SEE... HIS SUPER OFFENSIVE STYLE THAT USES FAST-TEMPO RISING FLAT SHOTS
IS DEFINITELY IDENTICAL TO THE "RISING SUN", YAZAWA-SAN'S.
IN SHORT, ITS SUPER HIGH RISK, HIGH RETURNS.
HE MIGHT BECOME THE CLOSEST PLAYER TO THE WORLD STAGE IF HE CAN OVERCOME THE HURDLES.


ALTHOUGH MARUO-KUN DEFINITELY IS AN INTERESTING PLAYER,
OKADA-KUN MIGHT STILL BE ONE STEP ABOVE HIM.


THE SCORE IS A TIE... HOW'S THE CONTENT...?
PLAYER
I
II
OKADA TAKAYUKI
4
MARUO EIICHIRO
3
DUNLOP
13

HUH ..? ISN'T OKADA-KUN THE ONE STRUGGLING HERE?
I DUNNO WHAT YOU'VE BEEN ANALYZING WITH YOUR NOTES,
BUT LIKE I'LL LET YOU TAKE DOWN MY RISING FLAT SHOT THAT EASILY!
I ALMOST GOT THE TIMING!
EVEN IF HIS TEMPO IS FAST AND UNIQUE, I CAN GET THE RHYTHM IF IT'S REPETITIVE!


A TOPSPIN THAT GOES AS WIDE AS POSSIBLE!
ANOTHER ONE .. A BIT DEEPER,
STRONG FLAT!

A FORE-HAND SLICE?
MY RISING FLAT SHOT IS NO LONGER A THREAT?!
YOU AND YOUR CHEAP TRICKS... ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY THAT IF IT'S YOUR SERVICE GAME...

ダッ
40 - 15
YES!
I'M STARTING TO GRASP THE RISING FLAT SHOT!!!

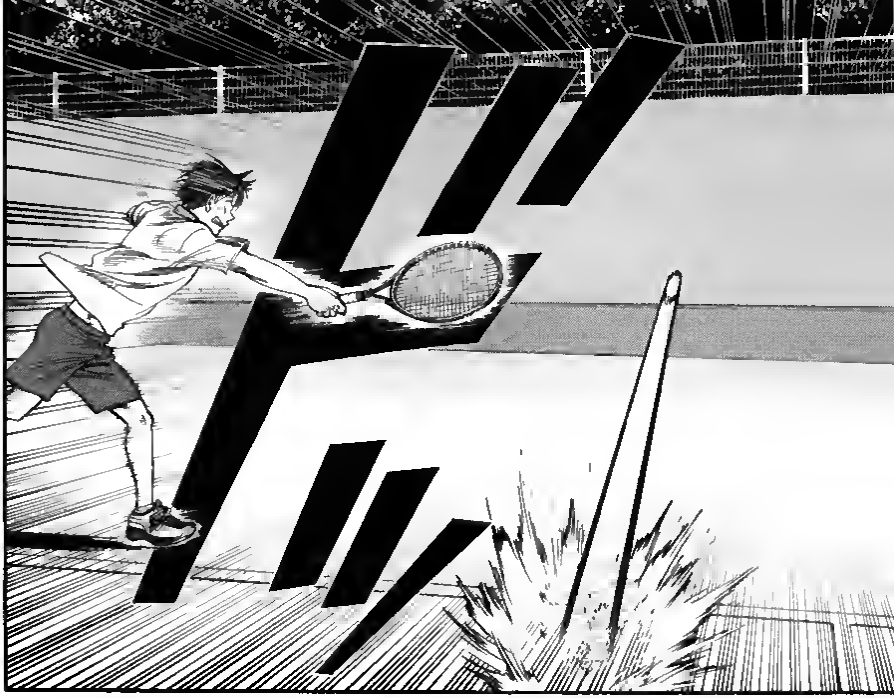
NO WAY... HE ACTUALLY HAS "IT"?
NOT ONLY HE IS GOOD UNDER PRESSURE, HE HAS HIS OWN UNIQUE STYLE.
WHAT AN UNBELIEVABLE ABILITY TO ADAPT TO SITUATIONS...
IS IT HIS ANALYSIS? CONCENTRATION? HIS
FOREHAND SLICES ARE PRETTY HARD, RIGHT?
IT'S 'CAUSE HE PRACTICES EVERY SINGLE SHOT TO ITS FULLEST.
CHARISMA, UNIQUENESS, A STRONG SPIRIT... YOU CAN'T REALLY DESCRIBE IT IN ONE WORD.
BUT YOU NEED TO HAVE "IT" IF YOU WANT TO BE A PRO...
I WONDER WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?
YONEX
PA-M!

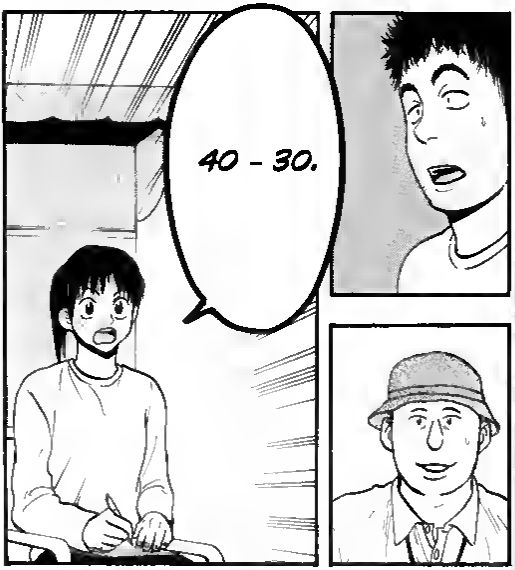
GAME, SET, AND MATCH. MISS MIKI YAZAWA. COUNT: 4 - 6. 7 - 5. 6 - 2.
HER POWERFUL RISING FLAT SHOT FINALLY PENETRATED THE WORLD!!!
YAZAWA MIKI ADVANCES TO THE WIMBLEDON SEMI-FINALS!!!
FINALLY... SHE FINALLY BEAT THE NO. 1 PLAYER IN THE WORLD!

A-AMAZING!
SHE'S BEEN CHALLENGING THE BRUTE STRENGTH OF THE WORLD STAGE WITH ALL-OR-NOTHING HIGH-PRECISION TECHNIQUES!!!
SHE SHOWED JAPAN HOW ONE CAN CHALLENGE THE WORLD STAGE!!!
ON TOP OF THAT, FASTER... EVEN FASTER!
IN ORDER TO LOWER THE ERRORS, I NEED TO RAISE BOTH THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF MY TRAINING.
T-THIS IS IT! MY MAIN STRENGTHS ARE FLAT SHOTS ANYWAY...
THE BIGGEST HURDLE IS THAT MY MISTAKES WILL INCREASE IN RESPONSE TO THE INCREASE IN POWER.
HOW COULD HE GROW INTO A PLAYER THAT HAS POTENTIAL TO HAVE "IT" IN JUST TWO OR THREE YEARS?
EVEN THOUGH I STILL DON'T CONSIDER MYSELF TO HAVE WHAT IT TAKES YET...

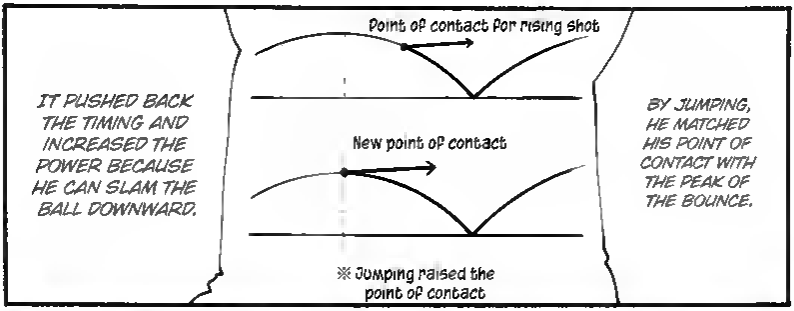
HA!
I'LL DEFINITELY KEEP THIS ONE!
IN THAT CASE .. I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO "THAT"!
COME ON, CHANGE THE PACE
HERE IT IS!
COME AT ME WITH A TOP-SPIN!

THIS IS IT!!!
HUH? THE TIMING IS... DIFFERENT.
HE... JUMPED?




40 - 30.

THE TIMING AND THE HEIGHT OF HIS POINT OF CONTACT CHANGED DUE TO THE JUMP.
W-WHAT WAS THAT .? IT WAS SIMILAR TO A RISING FLAT SHOT, BUT DIFFERENT...


IT PUSHED BACK THE TIMING AND INCREASED THE POWER BECAUSE HE CAN SLAM THE BALL DOWNWARD.
Point of contact for rising shot
New point of contact
※ Jumping raised the point of contact
BY JUMPING, HE MATCHED HIS POINT OF CONTACT WITH THE PEAK OF THE BOUNCE.

THIS QUICKLY... DAMN IT.
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO USE THIS...
LOOKS LIKE IT WILL BE HARDER THAN I THOUGHT...
RIGHT WHEN I THOUGHT I FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT...

RGH!
HERE COMES ANOTHER ONE...
#197: TEMPORARY OUTLOOK

JUMP SHOT!

HE WILL BREAK IT IF I LOSE TWO POINTS IN A ROW.
HE CAUGHT UP TO ME IN MY SERVICE GAME...
40 - 40.
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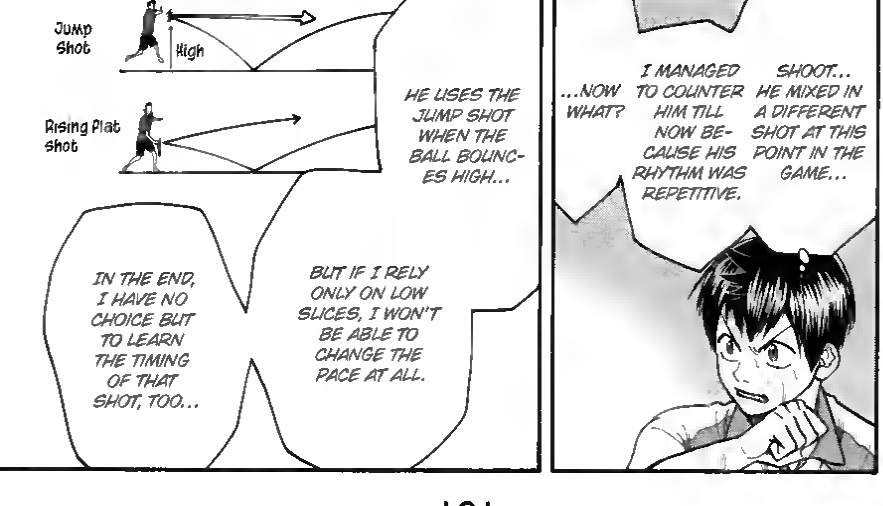
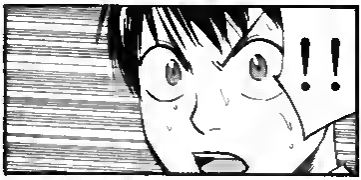

Jump Shot
High
Rising Flat shot
HE USES THE JUMP SHOT WHEN THE BALL BOUNCES HIGH...
BUT IF I RELY ONLY ON LOW SLICES, I WON'T BE ABLE TO CHANGE THE PACE AT ALL.
IN THE END, I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LEARN THE TIMING OF THAT SHOT, TOO...
...NOW WHAT?
I MANAGED TO COUNTER HIM TILL NOW BECAUSE HIS RHYTHM WAS REPETITIVE.
SHOOT... HE MIXED IN A DIFFERENT SHOT AT THIS POINT IN THE GAME...

CAN I DO THAT IN JUST TWO POINTS?
A NET PLAY.
THERE'S A WAY TO DEAL WITH HIS SHOTS AND TAKE HIM BY SURPRISE...
WAIT... I'M THE ONE SERV-ING RIGHT NOW.
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET THROUGH THIS WITH JUST MY SERVES ...

FAULT!
THAT WASN'T SMOOTH... BUT HE TRIED TO PLAY ON THE NET. DOES THAT MEAN HE'S STILL PRETTY CALM...?
I CAN'T MOVE UP WHEN IT'S MY SECOND SERVE.. FOR THE MEAN-TIME, I HAVE TO PREVENT HIM FROM HITTING HIS JUMP SHOTS...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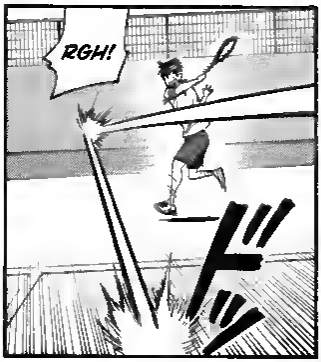
BY USING LOW FLAT SHOTS INSTEAD!


RGH!
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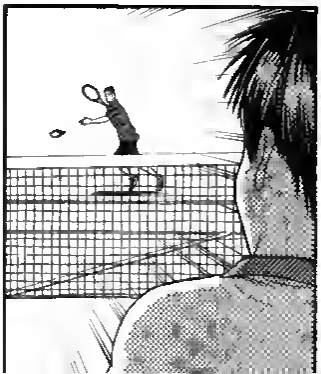

HE JUMPED EVEN AGAINST FLAT SHOT!!!

YEAH!
ADVANTAGE, OKADA.
WOW! OKADA DID IT!
SHOOT... IF I LOSE ONE MORE, HE GETS A BREAK.

IT'S TOO MUCH OF A STRETCH TO DO IT IN THIS SINGLE POINT. .
IF I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO CAREFULLY ANALYZE THE JUMP SHOT...
I CAN'T ESCAPE THIS CRISIS
I FEEL LIKE JUMP SHOTS SHOULD BE EASIER TO GRASP THE TIMING SINCE IT'S A LOT MORE OBVIOUS, BUT...
IF I DON'T COME UP WITH SOMETHING.

AND THEN...
MORE THAN ANYTHING, I NEED TO GET THE FIRST SERVE IN.
A SERVICE DASH AGAIN... IS THAT THE ANSWER YOU GOT FROM YOUR PRETTY ANALYSIS...?
AVOID THE RALLY BATTLE FOR NOW, AND CHALLENGE HIM WITH A VOLLEY!!!

THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE TRIES TO DO WHEN THEY CAN'T DEAL WITH MY FLAT SHOTS. VOLLEY PLAYS...
ARE WAY TOO OBVIOUS!
WHAT A SHOT.
It's traveling so low!

OKAY, NOW WHAT? RISING? JUMP?
THAT MEANS... THE TIMING OF HIS SHOT WILL BE DELAYED BY A BIT COMPARED TO HIS USUAL RISING FLAT SHOT...
SO...
HIS BODY IS LOW... SO IT'S A JUMP?!

!?
C-CRAP...
OUT!
GAME, OKADA. 5 – 3.

HE BROKE...!!!
Jump shot:
Point of contact is far back, but fast.
Rising flat shot:
Point of contact is front, but slow.
HIS CONTACT WAS MUCH FURTHER BACK, AND THE BALL WAS A LOT FASTER...

DID IT SEEM LIKE HE MADE A MISTAKE BECAUSE HE SAW THE BALL TOO CLEARLY?
I GOT A BREAK... BUT WHAT IS THIS FEELING?

IF I LOSE THIS GAME, I'LL LOSE THIS SET...

ダンロップ
全日本ジュニアテニス
PLAYER
I
OKADA TAKAYUKI
5
MARUO EIICHIRO
3
DUNLOP

LOOKS LIKE IT'S EASIER TO FIGURE OUT THE TIMING WHEN I'M AT THE NET THAN WHEN I'M STAYING AT THE BASELINE.

KAN
BUT THAT WASN'T TOO BAD..
I WAS ABLE TO FEEL THE TIMING OF THE JUMP SHOT BY PLAYING AT THE FRONT.

HE PROBABLY SEES THE BALL A LOT BETTER THAN I IMAGINED.. I GOT TO HURRY UP AND TAKE THIS SET.

BUT MY OPPONENT HAS THE ADVANTAGE IN A RETURN GAME, SO I CAN'T MOVE TO THE NET IF I CAN'T CREATE AN OPENING FROM THE BASELINE.
IS HE BEING NOTICEABLY FORCEFUL BECAUSE HE WANTS TO GET TO THE NET?
GAME 9.
アン
アン
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OUT!
15 - 15.
YES!
NOW THE QUESTION IS.. HOW CAN I GET TO THE NET MORE EASILY?
I KNEW IT. FOR NOW, IT IS EASIER TO GET A POINT FROM OKADA-KUN WHEN I'M UP FRONT.
THEN, I JUST HAVE TO KEEP HIM CHAINED AT THE BACK..
IS IT 'CAUSE OF HIS EYES? HE IS ANNOYING WHEN HE'S ON THE NET.

SHOOT... I CAN'T MOVE UP THAT EASILY IF HIS SHOTS ARE THIS DEEP.
BUT... THIS IS MY CHANCE TO FIGURE OUT THE DIFFERENCE IN TIMING BETWEEN HIS RISING FLAT SHOT AND HIS JUMP SHOT.
30 – 15.
WHEN I AM UP FRONT, I'LL LAUNCH A COUNTERATTACK RIGHT AWAY!!!
IN ORDER TO FIGHT HIM OFF, I NEED TO BEAT HIM IN A RALLY!!!
IF I'M STUCK AT THE BACK,
I'LL DO WHAT I CAN AT THE BACK.

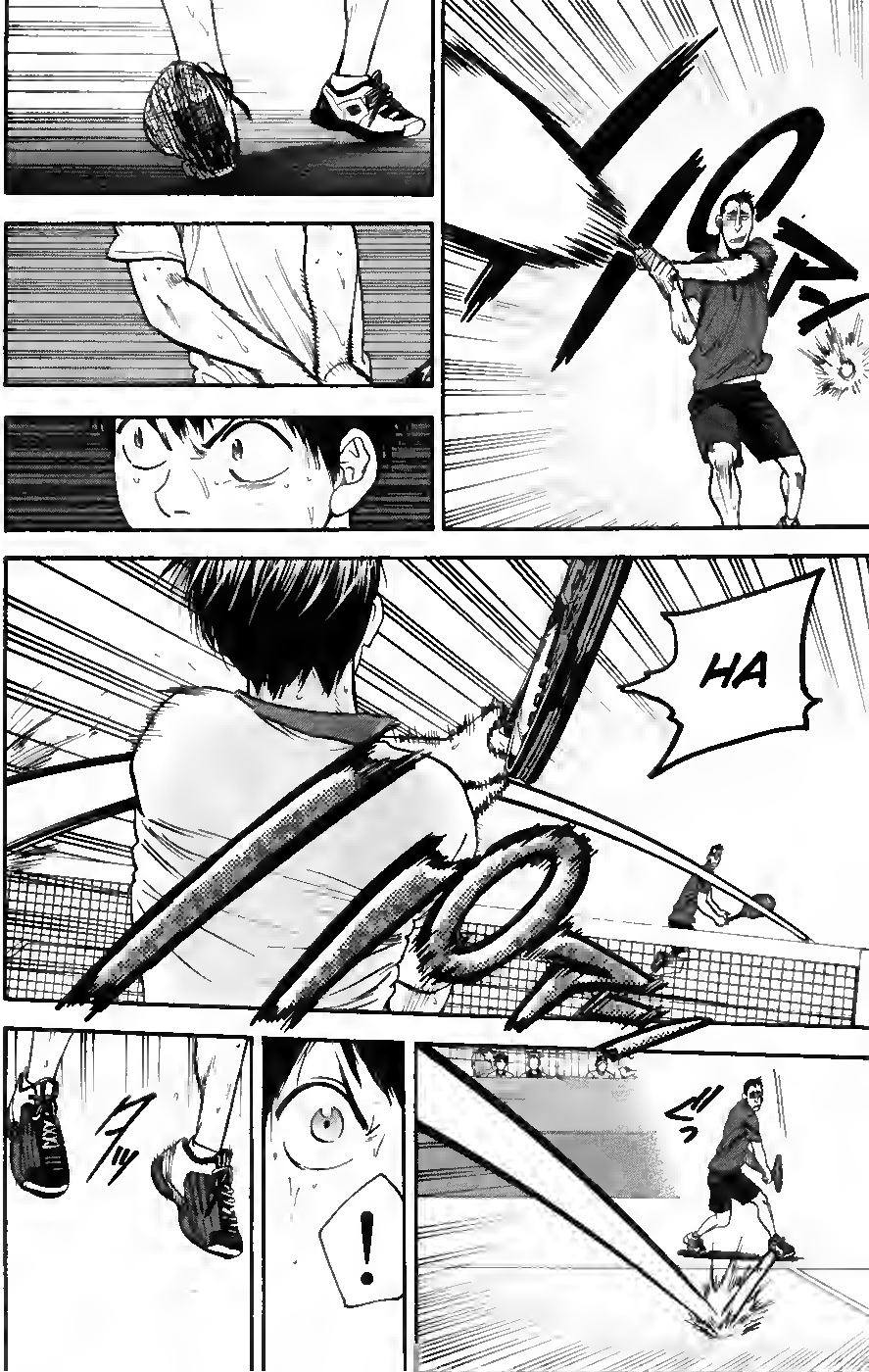
AND COMING UP WITH NEW FORMS OF ATTACK!
THIS IS EXACTLY WHY I'VE BEEN STRENGTHENING MY SHOTS

I WILL GRASP THE TIMING OF HIS JUMP SHOTS LITTLE BY LITTLE...
AND DOMINATE HIM IN RALLIES AND FINISH IT AT THE NET!!!
#198: HOW TO USE THE COURT.

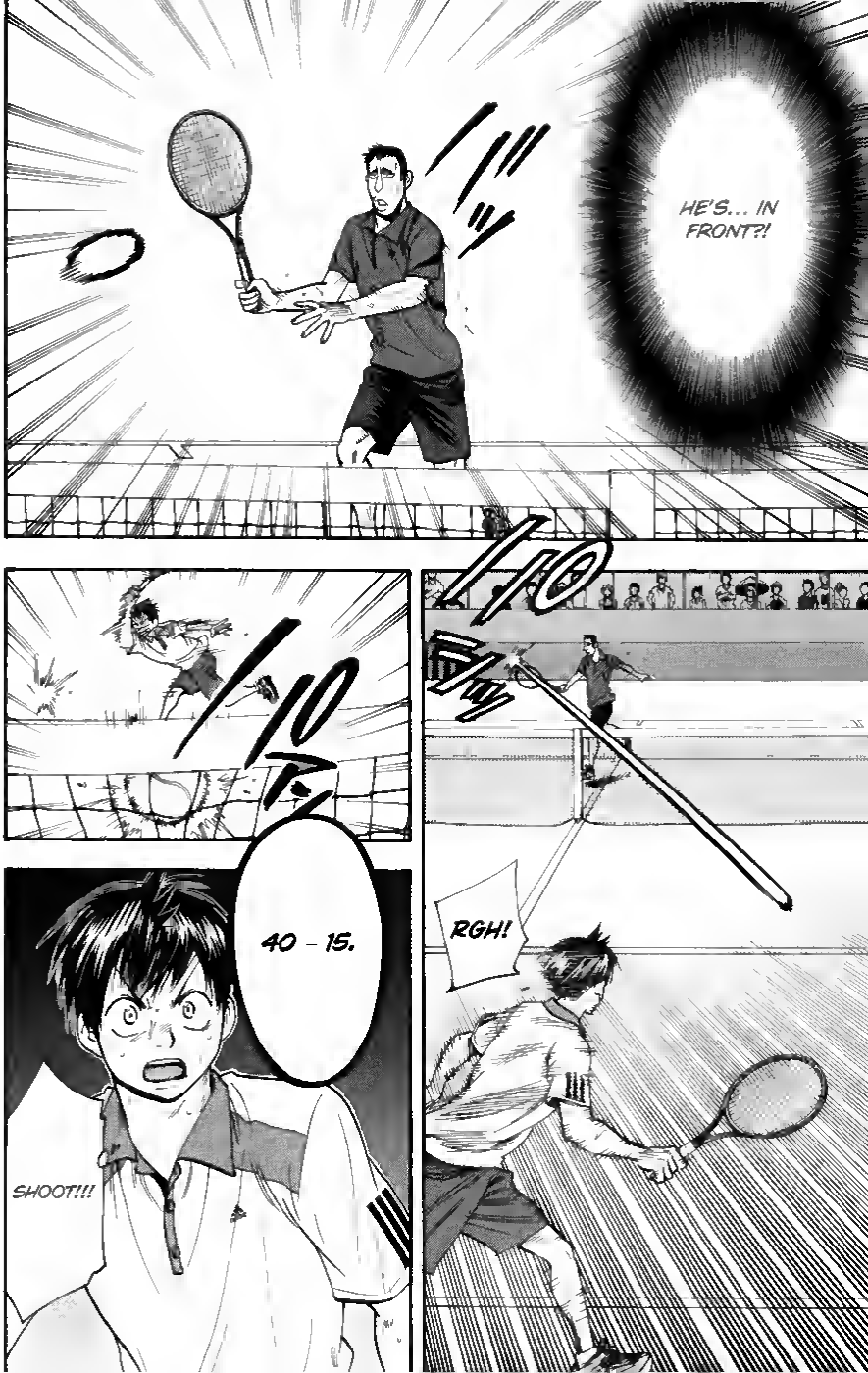
HA!

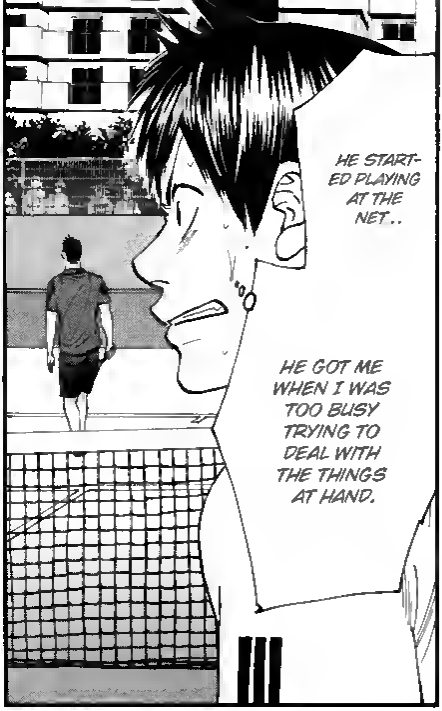
AND INCREASED ATTACK PATTERNS,
USING MY STRENGTHENED SHOTS...

THIS IS A REGULAR RISING FLAT SHOT!

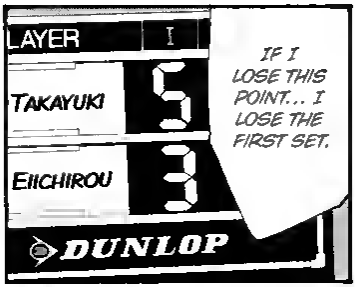

HA
!

AND THIS IS... THE JUMP SHOT!!!
IT'S HARD TO KEEP UP EVEN IF I KNOW IT'S COMING BECAUSE THE TIMING IS SO DIFFERENT. .
IT'S BECAUSE I'M STILL NOT COMPLETELY CLEAR FROM THE IMAGE OF HIS RISING FLAT SHOT...
OKADA-KUN'S REPETITIVENESS, WHICH WAS ONE OF HIS FEW WEAKNESSES, HAS DISAPPEARED...

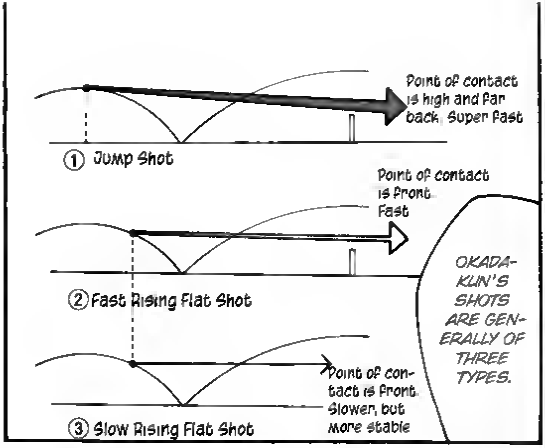

HE'S... IN FRONT?!
110
110
RGH!
40 - 15.
SHOOT!!!


HE STARTED PLAYING AT THE NET..
HE GOT ME WHEN I WAS TOO BUSY TRYING TO DEAL WITH THE THINGS AT HAND.

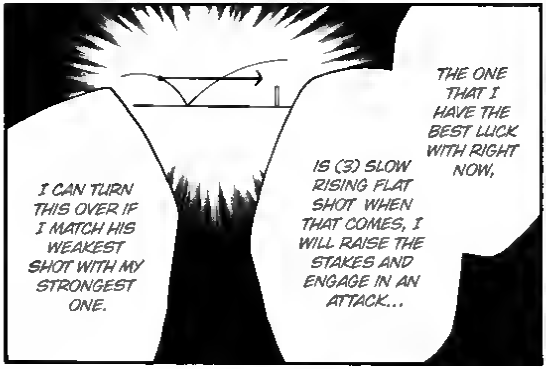
I CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE THIS POINT NO MATTER WHAT
BUT I'M A SITTING DUCK IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?


LAYER
I
TAKAYUKI
5
EIICHIROU
3
DUNLOP
IF I LOSE THIS POINT... I LOSE THE FIRST SET.

IF I DON'T GET THE HANG OF OKADA-KUN'S JUMP SHOT DURING THIS SET..
I'LL BE REALLY AT THE EDGE ON THE SECOND SET.


Point of contact is high and far back. Super Fast
① Jump Shot
Point of contact is Front. Fast
② Fast Rising Flat Shot
Point of contact is Front. Slower, but more stable
③ Slow Rising Flat Shot
OKADA-KUN'S SHOTS ARE GENERALLY OF THREE TYPES.

HOW ABOUT NARROWING DOWN MY TARGET
LIKE NABAE-KUN DID TO ME BEFORE?


I CAN TURN THIS OVER IF I MATCH HIS WEAKEST SHOT WITH MY STRONGEST ONE.
IS (3) SLOW RISING FLAT SHOT WHEN THAT COMES, I WILL RAISE THE STAKES AND ENGAGE IN AN ATTACK...
THE ONE THAT I HAVE THE BEST LUCK WITH RIGHT NOW,

FIFTEEN SECONDS.

EVEN AS I DO THAT, MY BODY WILL SLOWLY START LEARNING ITS TIMING...
BUT AGAINST HIS JUMP SHOT, I WILL KEEP THE RISK LOW AND TRY MY BEST NOT TO GET PUSHED AROUND BY RETURNING AS DEEP AS POSSIBLE...

I CAN'T LET MYSELF BE DRIVEN TO A CORNER EVEN MORE!!!
THIS ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR ITSELF IS A HUGE GAMBLE FOR ME ANYWAY.
IF I CAN BREAK THIS GAME, WE ARE BACK TO A TIE I'LL BE ABLE TO GET OUT OF THIS CLIFF.
OKAY. THAT'S THE STRATEGY I CAME UP WITH WITHIN THE TIME I HAD
I JUST HAVE TO TRUST IT

RGH... NICE SERVE!
BUT I RETURNED IT!
HE'S GOING TO JUMP!

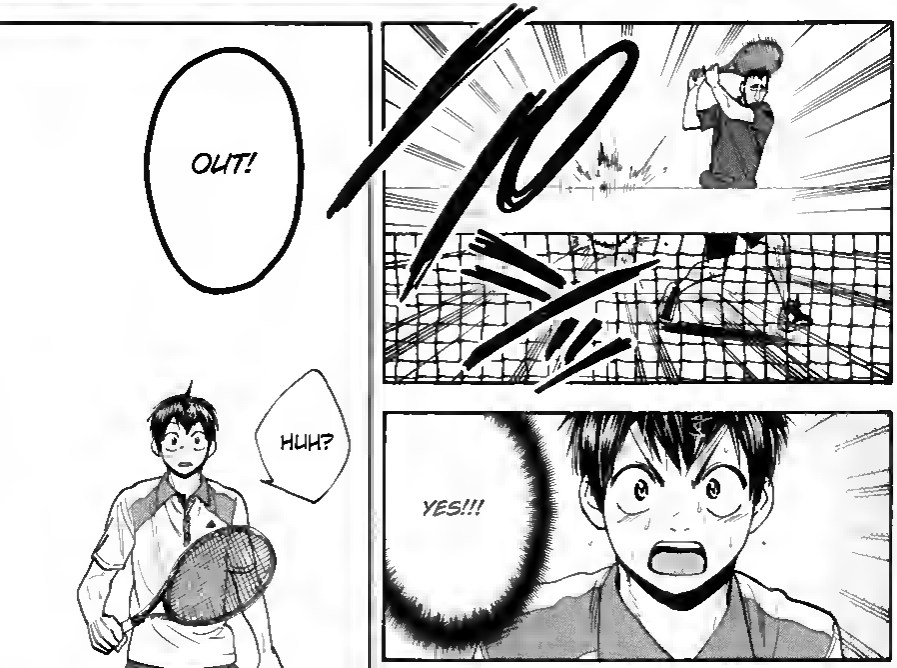
PLAYING SAFE... BUT DEEP!
ANOTHER JUMP!

OKAY, THIS ONE IS THE REGULAR RISING FLAT SHOT!
THE TIMES WHEN OKADA-KUN HITS SLOW RISING FLAT SHOTS...
ARE USUALLY WHEN I HIT A PRETTY GOOD SLICE.
WITH A LOW-SLIDING SLICE...
BE MORE AGGRESSIVE..
HERE IT IS! THE SLOW RISING FLAT SHOT!

OKAY, THIS IS IT...
IT'S ALL-OR-NOTH-ING!

AYE?!
HA!
!?
SHOOT... I HAD TOO MUCH STRENGTH. I PULLED TOO MUCH.

BUT...
GO IN!


OUT!
HUH?
YES!!!

I LOST ON THE FIRST SET...
I-IT WAS AN OUT...
FIRST SET WON BY OKADA. COUNT: 6 – 3.
YE AH HH HH HH HH H!
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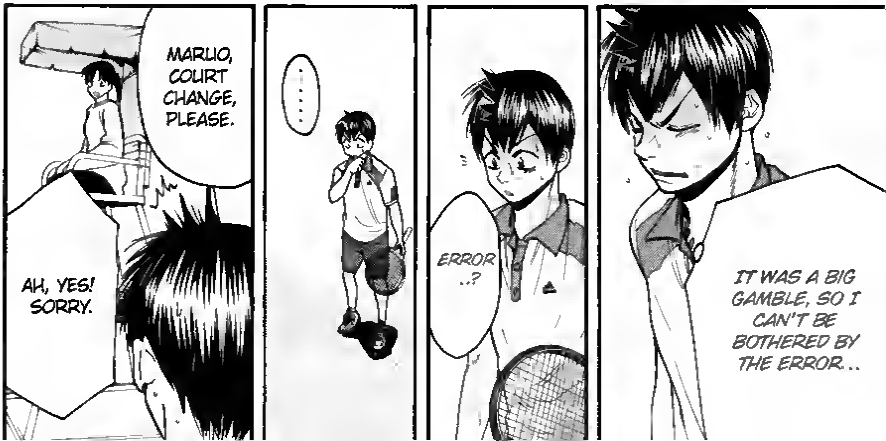
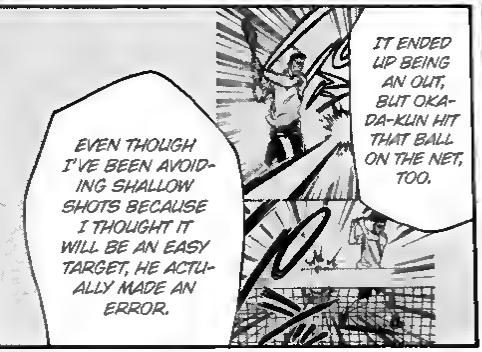
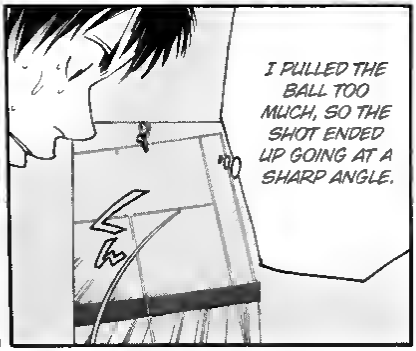
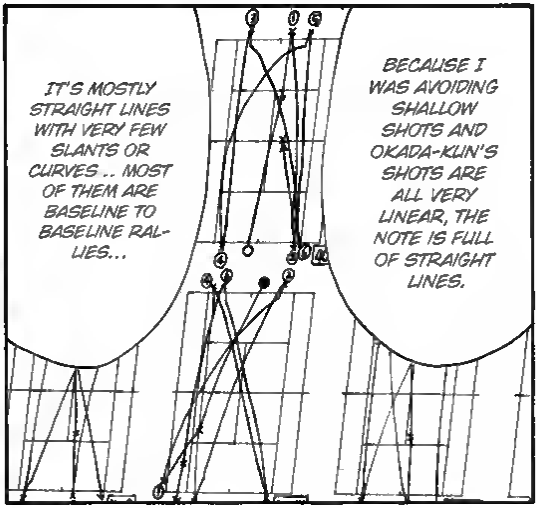
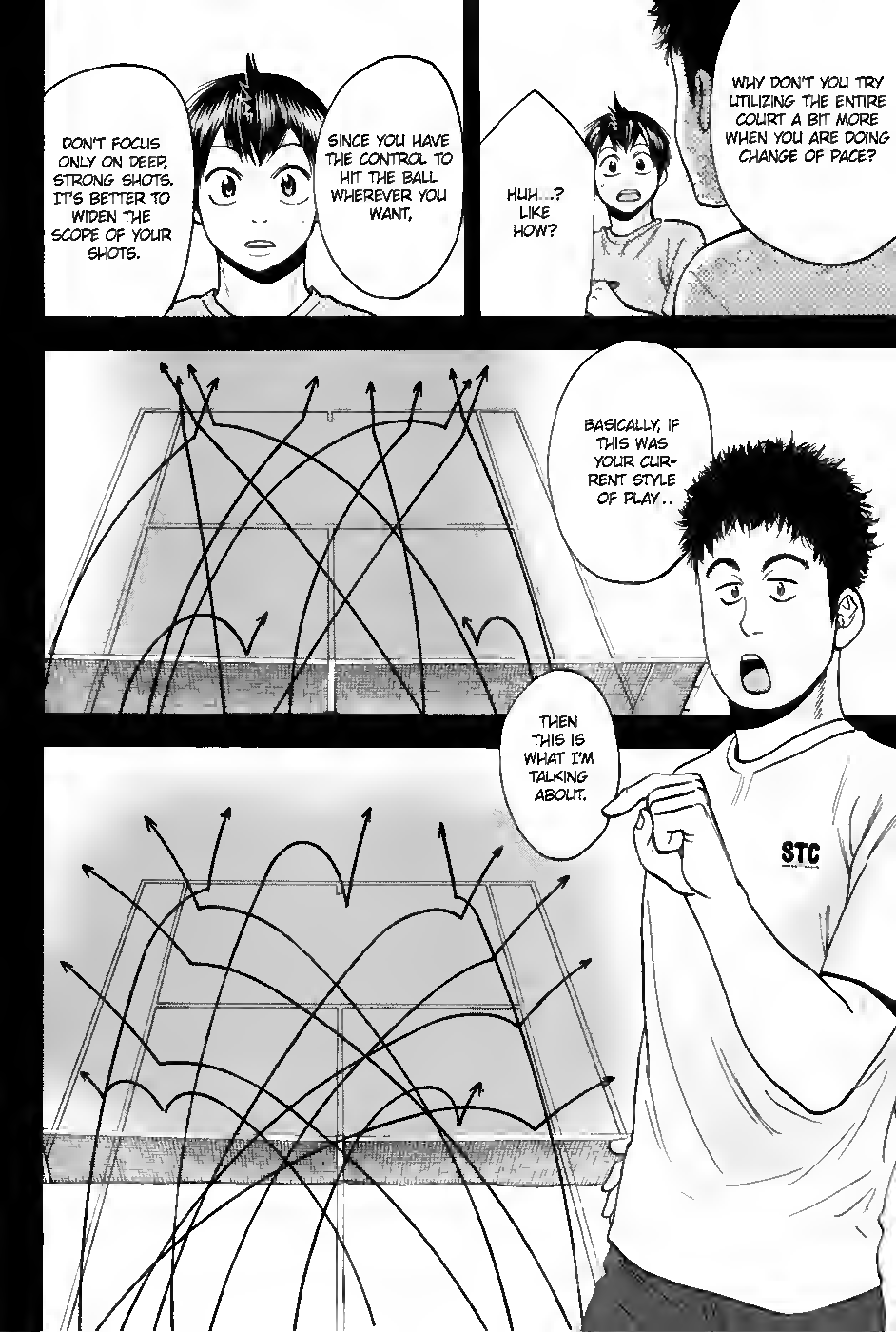

MARUO, COURT CHANGE, PLEASE.
AH, YES! SORRY.
.....
ERROR ..?
IT WAS A BIG GAMBLE, SO I CAN'T BE BOTHERED BY THE ERROR..


EVEN THOUGH I'VE BEEN AVOIDING SHALLOW SHOTS BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WILL BE AN EASY TARGET, HE ACTUALLY MADE AN ERROR.
IT ENDED UP BEING AN OUT, BUT OKADA-KUN HIT THAT BALL ON THE NET, TOO.


I PULLED THE BALL TOO MUCH, SO THE SHOT ENDED UP GOING AT A SHARP ANGLE.

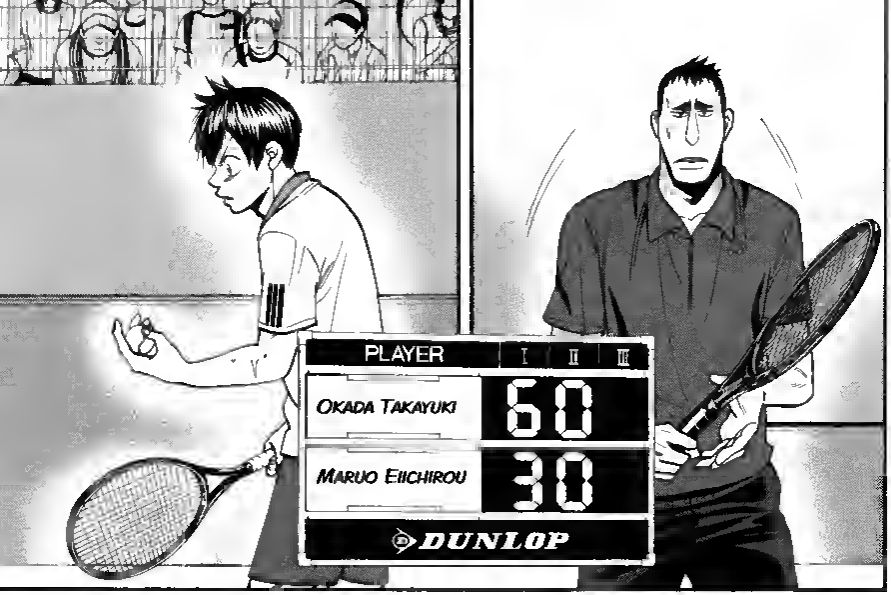
HEY, MARUO.


IT'S MOSTLY STRAIGHT LINES WITH VERY FEW SLANTS OR CURVES .. MOST OF THEM ARE BASELINE TO BASELINE RALLIES...
BECAUSE I WAS AVOIDING SHALLOW SHOTS AND OKADA-KUN'S SHOTS ARE ALL VERY LINEAR, THE NOTE IS FULL OF STRAIGHT LINES.


DON'T FOCUS ONLY ON DEEP, STRONG SHOTS. IT'S BETTER TO WIDEN THE SCOPE OF YOUR SHOTS.
SINCE YOU HAVE THE CONTROL TO HIT THE BALL WHEREVER YOU WANT,
HUH...? LIKE HOW?
WHY DON'T YOU TRY UTILIZING THE ENTIRE COURT A BIT MORE WHEN YOU ARE DOING CHANGE OF PACE?
BASICALLY, IF THIS WAS YOUR CURRENT STYLE OF PLAY..
THEN THIS IS WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
STC

MY SKILLS AND MY PLAY STYLE ARE CAPABLE OF USING THE ENTIRE SPACE ON THE COURT...
EVEN IF IT'S NOT AGAINST OKADA-KUN,
THAT'S RIGHT...
IF THAT'S THE CASE... SHOULDN'T I TRY TO PLAY BY MY STYLE A BIT MORE?
ALTHOUGH IT'S DANGEROUS TO HIT SHALLOW SHOTS AGAINST OKADA-KUN, THEY COULD TURN OUT TO BE EFFECTIVE DEPENDING ON HOW I USE THEM...
OKAY.. THEN LET'S NOT BE INTIMIDATED AND TRY TO HIT MORE SHALLOW CROSSES.
HUH... ALREADY?!
TIME!

SO PLAY SAFE AGAINST JUMP SHOTS, AND TARGET THE SLOW BALLS. USE MORE CROSS SHOTS.
OTHER THAN THAT, THINGS AREN'T GOING TOO BAD.. SO THERE'S NO NEED TO CHANGE MY CURRENT STRATEGY.
PLAYER
I
II
III
OKADA TAKAYUKI
60
MARUO EIICHIROU
30
THIS IS THE TURNING POINT...
MY TENNIS WON'T LET THIS SET BE THE END!!!



#199: WIN BY STRATEGY

LAME...
AND LONG.
WHY'S HE NAMING IT?
YUP... LET'S NAME THAT "JUMPING OKADA BAZOOKA".
ビーム
BUT MARUO-KUN'S GOTTEN PRETTY GOOD, TOO...
OKADA-KUN SHOULD BE FEELING A BIT DESPERATE, TOO...

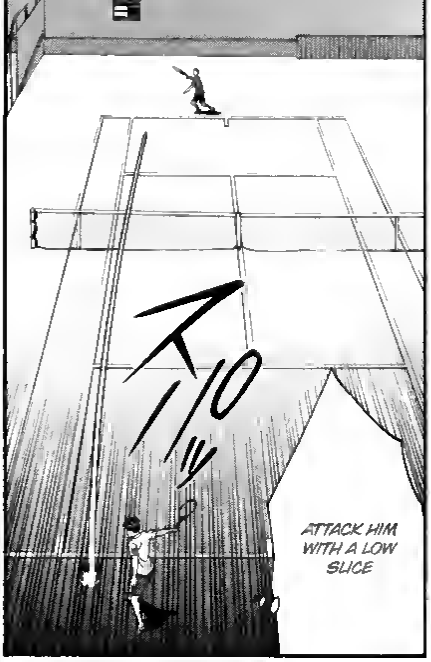
Campus
BASED ON MY KNOWLEDGE, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME OKADA-KUN USED A JUMP SHOT ON A MATCH.
I STARTED GRASPING HIS TIMING IN THE FIRST SET
AND, UNTIL HE STARTED USING THAT JUMP SHOT, THE GAME WAS FLOWING IN MY FAVOR.
OKADA-KUN WAS FORCED TO CHANGE THAT FLOW.
IF HE HAD PERFECTED IT, HE WOULD'VE HAD USED IT FROM THE START. HE MUST'VE WANTED TO USE IT IN A SAFER ENVIRONMENT, BUT I WAS ABLE TO DRAG IT OUT.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS STILL AN INEXPERIENCED, HIGH-RISK SHOT THAT HAS BEEN HIS WEAPON ONLY RECENTLY.
I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS DRIVEN TO A CORNER.
MY PROFESSIONAL FUTURE DEPENDS ON THE OUTCOME OF THIS SET, BUT...
MY OPPONENT IS EQUALLY DESPERATE...
THERE'S NO REASON TO BE INTIMIDATED BY LOSING THE FIRST SET.
IF WE ARE BOTH IN A TOUGH SITUATION...
THEN I SHOULD CHALLENGE MYSELF MORE.

SINCE MOST OF MY SERVES WERE TO THE CENTER DURING THE FIRST SET...
Wide
20%
Center
Body
5 %
75 %
15 - 0.

ONE BY ONE... AIM FOR THE TOP SPOTS.
OKAY...! MY SERVES ARE GOOD.
AIM HARDER FOR THE SECOND SERVE

HERE'S THE JUMP SHOT!
PLAYING SAFE IS THE NO. 1 PRIORITY AGAINST THIS ONE!

WITH ABOUT 4:16 STABILITY, TRY TO HIT IT DEEP SO HE WON'T RETURN IT BACK TOO HARD.
A FAST RISING...
IF MY SHOTS ARE GOOD, THEN THERE'S LESS CHANCE FOR HIM TO USE THE JUMP SHOT.
BE MORE AGGRES-SIVE ON THIS ONE...


ATTACK HIM WITH A LOW SLICE

ANOTHER FAST RISING...

JUMP RIGHT INTO ATTACK MODE!

HERE'S THE SLOW RISING!

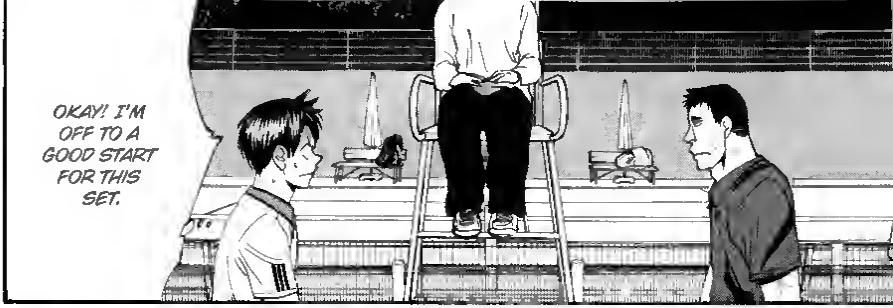
110 km
TRY TO UTILIZE THE COURT AREA WITH A SHORT CROSS!
!
SHALLOW BALLS ARE RISKY..
BUT IF I CONTROL THEM RIGHT...

IT'S EFFECTIVE AGAINST OKADA-KUN BECAUSE MOST OF HIS SHOTS ARE LINEAR!
..NOW TOWARDS THIS NEW OPEN SPACE,

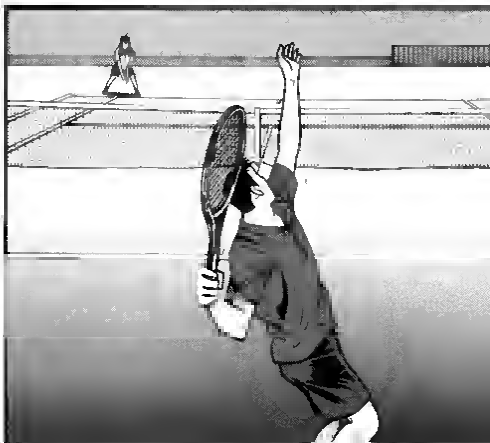
30 - 0.
YES!
YUP..
THAT'S IT!
(1) PLAY SAFE AGAINST A JUMP SHOT, BUT RETURN DEEP.
(2) NARROW ATTACKS TO THE SLOW RISING FLAT SHOTS
(3) SHAKE HIM USING A CHANGE OF PACE THAT UTILIZES THE ENTIRE COURT
...THIS IS IT!!!

SO HE'S PLANNING ON TARGETING MY OTHER SHOTS...
BRING IT ON.
OHH!!! JUMPING BAZOOKA COMBO!!!
JUMP SHOT IS AN EXTENSION OF THE RISING FLAT SHOT...
RGH!
40 - 30.
HE DECIDED TO HIT THEM IN A ROW ONCE HE REALIZED I'M AVOIDING THE JUMP SHOT.

RGH!
MY LONG YEARS OF HARD WORK IS THE FOUNDATION OF THIS NEW WEAPON!
HE WON'T MISS AT ALL .. DO I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO HOLD ON?
ホッ
GAME, MARUO. COUNT: 1 - 0. SECOND SET.
13
!


OKAY! I'M OFF TO A GOOD START FOR THIS SET.

I'LL FOCUS ON SAFELY RETURNING IT DEEP OVER AND OVER FOR NOW. I'LL FIND A BREAK-THROUGH EVENTUALLY
IT IS FUNDAMENTALLY A VERY HIGH-RISK SHOT.
JUMP SHOT ISN'T JUST A BRAND NEW WEAPON
A CERTAIN DEGREE OF MISSES ARE TO BE EXPECTED. MY STYLE IS ALL ABOUT COVERING THEM UP WITH OFFENSIVE POWER.
RUNNING AWAY ISN'T AN OPTION FOR MY TENNIS
MISTAKES ARE GIVEN IN A HIGH-RISK SHOT.

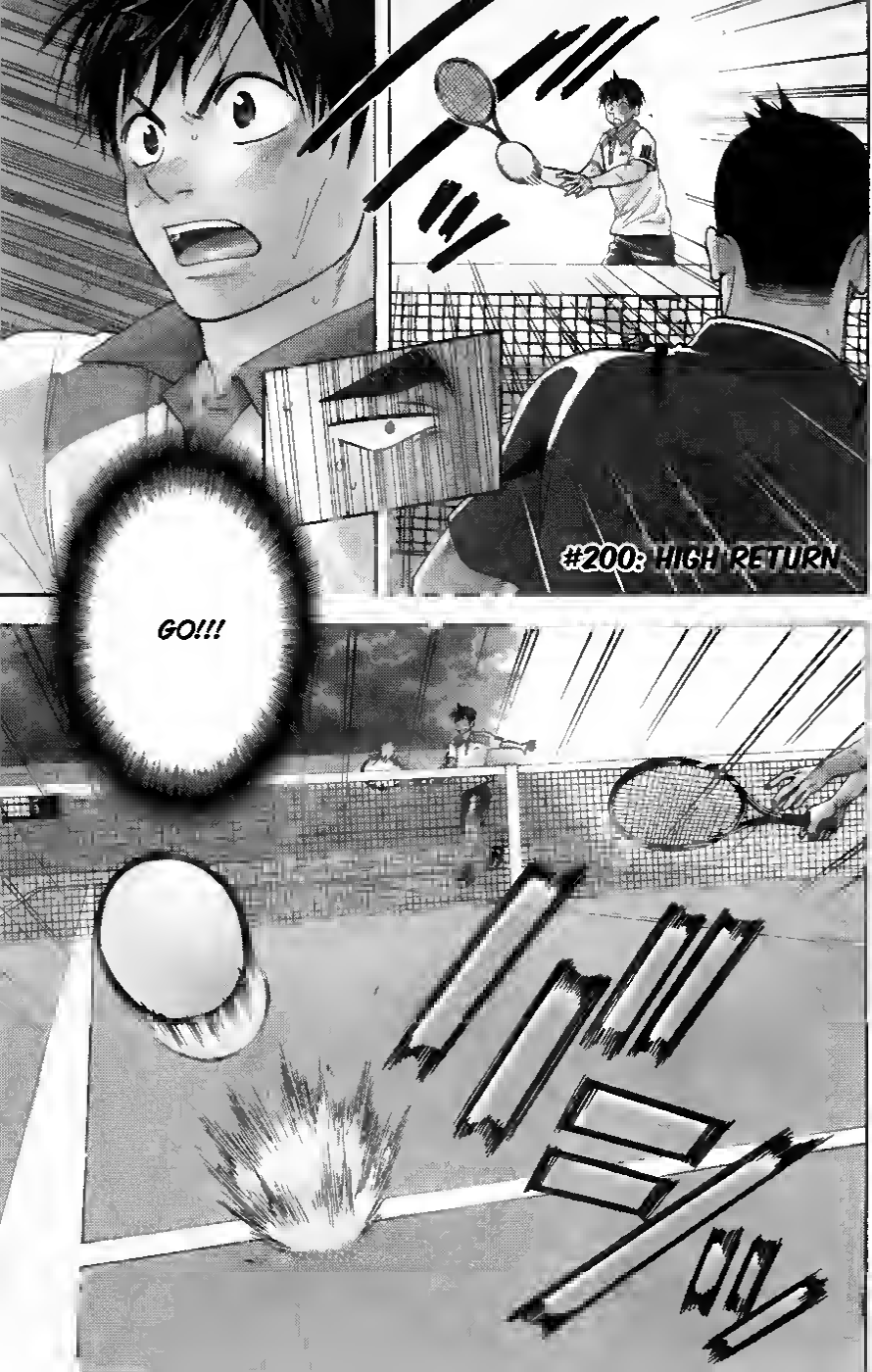


FOR RETURN GAMES, I'LL RELY MOSTLY ON SLICES OR FLAT SHOTS SINCE THEY'RE HARDER TO HIT WITH A JUMP SHOT
...HERE IS THE SLOW RISING FLAT SHOT!!!
IF OKADA-KUN GETS CORNERED BY THIS TACTIC...
HA!
HE WILL TRY TO USE FAST RISING FLAT SHOTS AS MUCH AS POS-SIBLE.

THEN HE BECOMES STATIC.
IT'LL BE EASIER TO READ HIS RHYTHM.
IT'LL BE EASIER TO CHANGE THE PACE.
ONCE THAT HAPPENS...
UTILIZE THE COURT WITH AN ACUTE CROSS.

AGAIN... WHAT THE HECK ARE THESE?!
ONE MORE!!!

IF HIS BALANCE IS COMPLETELY BROKEN, MOVE UP!!!
AND FINISH THIS!!!


#200: HIGH RETURN
GO!!!

Baby Steps

I CAN DO THIS...
THAT WORKED.. AND I HAD GOOD CONTROL OVER THE GAME, TOO...
0 - 15
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS OKADA-KUN'S SERVICE GAME..
Effective if there's a certain level of speed
Effective.
I FOUND MY CHANCE TO BREAK!
IF I CAN HIT IT TO A TIGHT SPOT THAT WILL BREAK MY OPPONENT'S BALANCE. EVEN SHORT SHOTS CAN BE EFFECTIVE...
I KNEW IT'D BE HARD FOR HIM TO RETURN A SHORT BALL WITH A FLAT SHOT

YES!!!

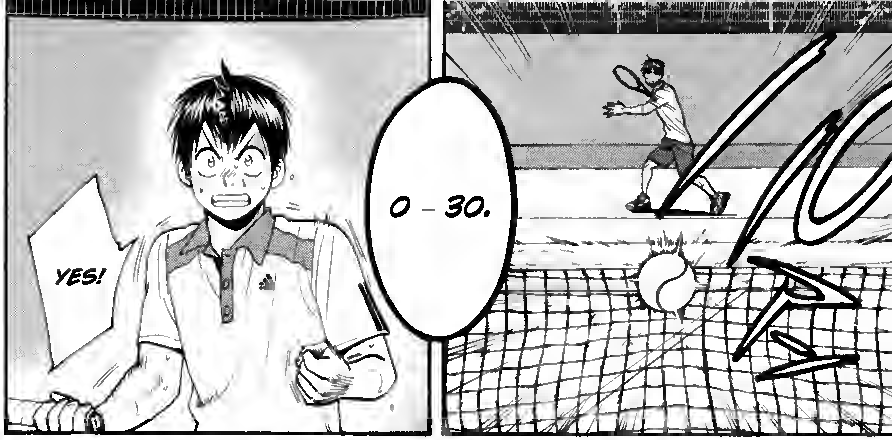
THOSE ARE USUALLY AN EASY TARGET FOR MY RISING SHOTS. .
BUT IT'S A DIFFERENT STORY IF HE HITS THEM LIKE THAT
DAMN IT. . SO ANNOYING .

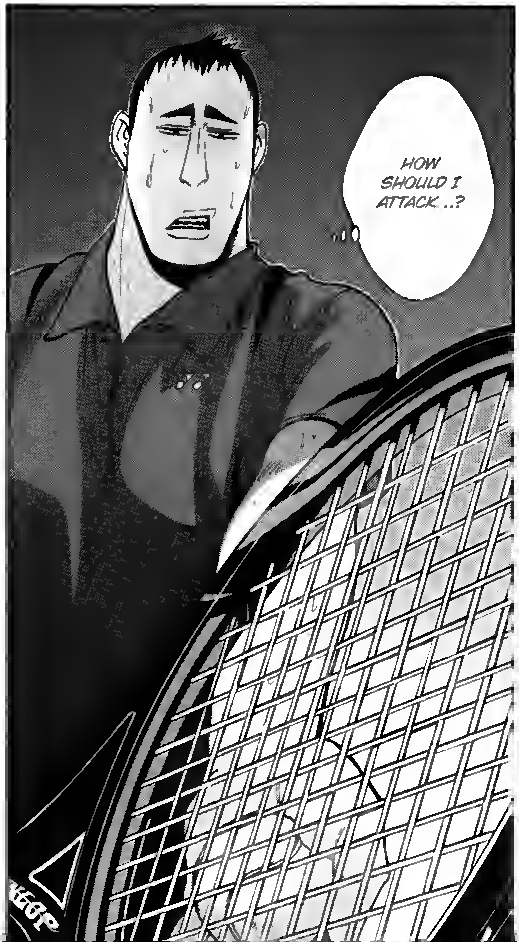
SHORT CROSSES, HUH . .

AS THE GAME PASSES BY, HIS PREDICTIONS GET MORE AND MORE ACCURATE..

EVEN AGAINST FAST RISING SHOTS, TAKE A GAMBLE...
BE AGGRES-SIVE IN MY RETURN GAMES.
ANOTHER SHARD ANGLE ..

HE FIGHTS BACK THE MOMENT MY SPEED DROPS.
BUT IF I KEEP HITTING FAST SHOTS, HE WILL READ MY TEMPO ..
THEN THIS IS THE ONLY CHOICE I HAVE!!!
HE'S REACTING FASTER THAN BEFORE ..
POWER SHOT TO THE OPEN COURT!!!


YES!
0 - 30.


HOW SHOULD I ATTACK ..?
BEEP

A MISS... JUST AS I HOPED ..
THIS IS WORKING .. STAY CALM ..

IF I GO TOO OVERBOARD WITH THE JUMP SHOTS, THERE'LL BE MORE MISSES ..
THEN HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO ATTACK ..?

DISCOVERING THAT SHORT CROSS WAS HUGE...
YEAH. YOU CAN'T HIT SHORT BALLS AGAINST OKADA UNLESS YOU'RE REALLY CONFIDENT WITH YOUR CONTROL.
MARUO'S INCREDIBLE.
NO, SHORT SHOTS ARE EASY TARGETS AS LONG AS I STAY CALM.
I CAN TURN THIS AROUND EASILY...
YOU CAN'T HELP PAYING ATTENTION TO SHORT BALLS ONCE YOU SEE THOSE SHOTS...

THE DOWN-THE-LINE SHOT WENT IN SO EASILY FOR THE FIRST TIME!!!
0 - 40.
THE SHORT CROSS IS WORKING A LOT BETTER THAN I THOUGHT.
110
110
STC

15 - 40.
MOVE AS CLOSE TO THE NET AS I CAN!!
I CAN'T HELP LOSING TO THE HIGH-RISK JUMP SHOTS ..

GAME MARUO. 2 - 0. SECOND SET.
FINALLY... MY BREAK!!!

I'LL DEFINITELY KEEP THE NEXT ONE!
I CAN RAISE THE STAKES EVEN MORE NOW!
YES.
SECOND SET GAME 3 WAS A SAFE KEEP FOR EIICHIROU.
OKADA BARELY MANAGED TO KEEP GAME 4 AFTER A LOT OF STRUGGLE
EIICHIROU HAD NO TROUBLE KEEPING GAME 5,
AND HE MANAGED TO LEAD GAME 6 TO HIS OWN FAVOR...
6
4
ILOP

With 15 – 40 on 4 – 1, he is already at a double break point.
Even though he was completely dominating the game,
YES!
15 – 40.
There was one liability that made Eiichirou anxious
But... he should be able to turn this into a pretty tough situation
Just by mixing in some regular spins and slices...
When we are this far...
It's safe to assume that he doesn't have any more new weapons like the jump shot...

THAT MEANS I CAN TURN THIS AROUND JUST BY MIXING IN SOME DIFFERENT SHOTS.
THE REASON WHY HE CAN EASILY RETURN MY RISING FLAT SHOTS RIGHT NOW IS BECAUSE MY TEMPO IS PRETTY SIMPLE AND REPETITIVE.
.....
NO...
THERE ARE OTHER OPTIONS.
BUT THE REASON WHY I FOCUS ON THIS TENNIS IS BECAUSE I KNOW I'LL EARN ULTIMATE STRENGTH WHEN IT'S PERFECTED.
I KNEW FROM THE START THAT USING ONLY RISING FLAT SHOTS WILL BE SUPER RISKY...
I WON'T STEP OUT OF THIS PATH...
BUT I WILL STICK TO MY RISING FLAT SHOTS ALONE...
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM I AM FACING WITH THAT...
IT'S PRETTY EASY TO MIX IN ONE DIFFERENT SHOT RIGHT NOW.
BUT THAT ACT WILL BE COMPLETELY CONTRADICTING MY PHILOSOPHY AND ALL THE HARD WORK I'VE DONE SO FAR.
I BET ALL ON THIS TENNIS BECAUSE I WANT TO HAVE THAT STRENGTH ONE DAY...
I'VE DEDICATED ALL MY TRAINING ON THAT...
FIFTEEN SECONDS.

IF I WANT TO MAKE A BREAK-THROUGH ONE DAY...
AND BECOME A MAN WHO HAS WHAT IT TAKES, THEN I CAN'T BACK DOWN HERE.
NO MATTER HOW TOUGH THE SITUATION IS...
I WILL BELIEVE IN MY TENNIS...
AND WIN!!!
KAA

IF I'M LOSING, THEN I'LL JUST RAISE THE RISKS UNTIL I STOP LOSING...
!
HE READ IT?!

AND POWER THROUGH WITH ALL MY STRENGTH!!!

...WHEN HE'S AT THE DEUCE COURT AND I RETURN HIS CENTER SERVE TO HIS BACKHAND SIDE, HE'S BEEN RETURNING THAT WITH A CROSS 80% OF THE TIME...
PERFECT.

WHEN MY PREDICTIONS ARE MET, I CAN CONTROL...
!
ANY BALL!
DROP SHOT...!
#201: UNEASINESS

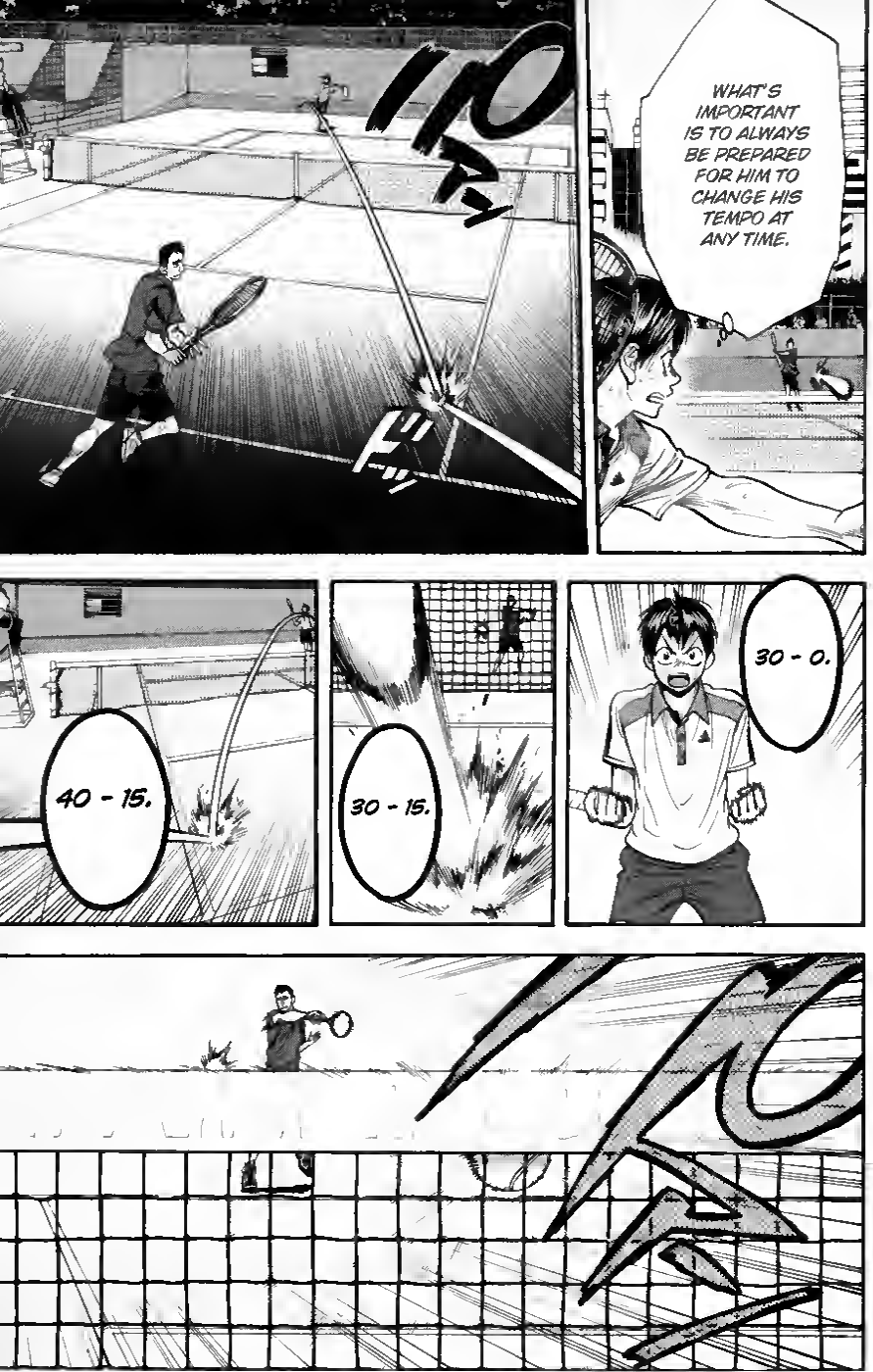
トッ
トッ
ぐっ
YES!
GAME, MARUO. COUNT 5 - 1. SECOND SET.

BACK TO BACK BREAKS!
NO WAY.. OKADA'S TOTALLY GETTING OWNED
HE FINISHED WITH SUCH A BEAUTIFUL DROP SHOT...
HE'S OWNING THE 3RD SEED.
#7
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS MARUO DUDE...?
N-NOT BAD...

IF I KEEP THIS, I CAN GET THE SECOND SET... WE'LL BE TIED.
DOWN THE LINE...
IF I MOVE HIM OUT OF THE COURT WITH MY SERVES, I'LL RETURN THIS FAST RISING FLAT SHOT...

HE SHOULD BE AWARE THAT I'M READING THE TEMPO OF HIS RISING FLAT SHOT...
THEN WHY WON'T HE TRY TO CHANGE THE TEMPO BY MIXING IN SOME DIFFERENT SHOTS?
HE KEEPS RETURNING WITH RISING FLAT SHOTS
NO MATTER HOW ADVANTAGEOUS I AM, HE WON'T CHANGE HIS STYLE.
THAT WOULD MAKE HIS RISING FLAT SHOTS EVEN MORE LETHAL...
ANY SHOT SHOULD BE EASIER THAN HITTING RISING FLAT SHOTS.
THERE'S NO WAY THE NO. 3 PLAYER IN THE NATION WOULD NOT REALIZE SUCH A SIMPLE FACT...

IT TURNED INTO A ONE-SIDED MATCH FOR MARUO-KUN THIS TIME...
15 - 0.
YES!
NO... OKADA-KUN'S REASON FOR NOT CHANG-ING THE RHYTHM ISN'T IMPORTANT...


WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS TO ALWAYS BE PREPARED FOR HIM TO CHANGE HIS TEMPO AT ANY TIME.
40 - 15.
30 - 15.
30 - 0.

SECOND SET WON BY MARUO. COUNT 6 - 1.
オオ
WE'RE IN THE FINAL SET.
オオオ
... I TURNED IT AROUND!
6 1
36

NOW WE'RE AT A TIE... AND THE GAME IS FLOWING IN MY FAVOR TOO!
OH... THE CROWD'S GOTTEN BIGGER.
YOU SERIOUS? WOW... YOU'RE RIGHT!
OKADA MIGHT ACTUALLY LOSE THIS ONE.
AGAINST A NON-SEEDER, TOO!
LOOK! LOOK! OKADA'S IN TROUBLE!
ガヴ
YONEX

... AM I TOO FIXATED ON RISING FLAT SHOTS?
SHOULD I STILL FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THIS HIGH-RISK TENNIS EVEN WHEN THIS IS A MATCH I C N'T AFFORD TO LOSE TO BE A PRO?
WHAT'S THE POINT IF I END UP NOT BECOMING A PRO AND MY TENNIS WILL STOP IMPROVING AFTER GOING TO COLLEGE?
AM I NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR IT? HAVE I BEEN FORCING MYSELF INTO A STYLE THAT WASN'T MEANT FOR ME JUST BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE A "MAN WHO HAS WHAT IT TAKES" LIKE IDE?
IS THIS 'ULTIMATE TENNIS' SOMETHING THAT CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY JUST A HANDFUL OF WORLD-CLASS GENIUSES LIKE YAZAWA-SAN?
ACTUALLY... HAVE I JUST BEEN USING MY TENNIS AS AN EXCUSE WHENEVER I LOSE?

I SHOULD BE FOCUSING ON A STRATEGY TO BEAT MY OPPONENT...
NO... I WON'T GET ANYWHERE BY THINKING THESE THINGS RIGHT NOW.
TIME!

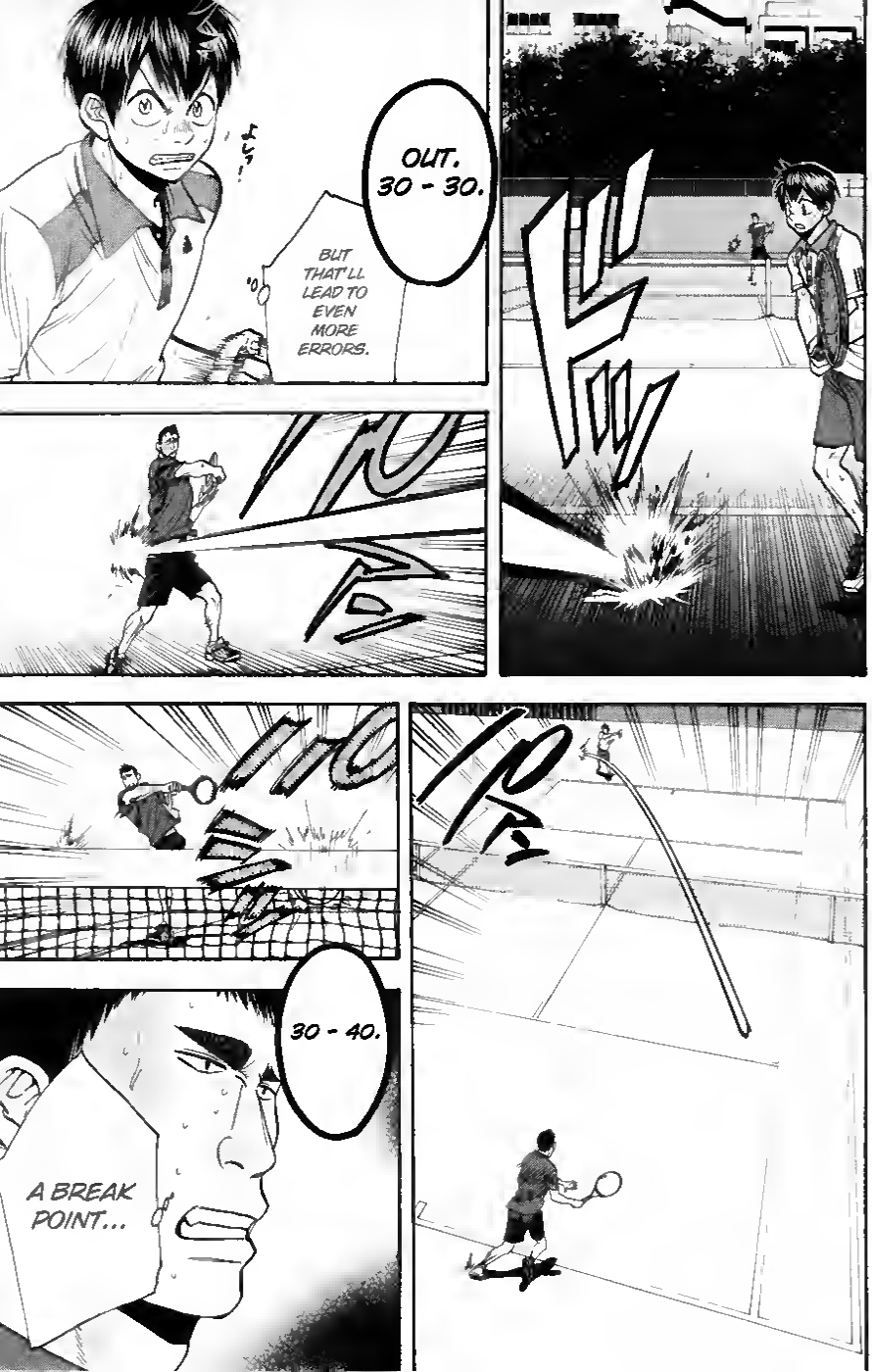
SO RIGHT NOW WOULD BE THE BEST TIME FOR ME TO TRY DIFFERENT SHOTS SINCE IT'S MY SERVICE GAME...
IF I'M GOING TO TRY SOMETHING, THEN I SHOULD DO IT WHEN I HAVE THE LEAD INSTEAD OF WHEN I'M IN TROUBLE.
ITA
... SO HE PLANS ON STICKING TO HIS RISING FLAT SHOTS?

MOREOVER, THESE SHOTS ARE PRETTY MILD. IS THIS BECAUSE HE'S HESITATING?
I THOUGHT HE WOULD DO IT SOMETIME AT THE START OF THE SET IF HE WAS TO CHANGE THE PACE, BUT HE HASN'T...
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN THIS IS ALREADY MY TURNING POINT!

0 - 15.
IF I'M GOING TO USE A TOP-SPIN OR A SLICE, IT SHOULD BE NOW...
BUT I WANT TO CONTINUE FIGHTING WITH MY TENNIS...
I CAN TELL... EVEN IF THIS TENNIS MIGHT BE A LONG DETOUR...
BUT ONCE IT'S COMPLETED, EVEN A JAPANESE PLAYER LIKE ME CAN OVERCOME THE DISADVANTAGES IN PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND FIGHT IN THE WORLD STAGE.

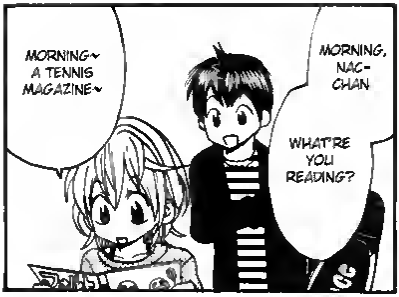
I CAN MOVE TO A HIGHER LEVEL!

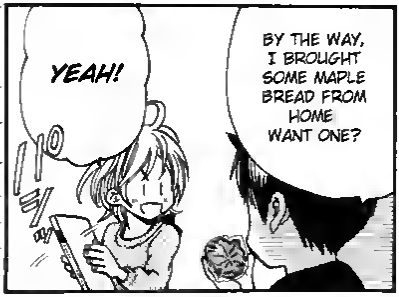
WOW!!! OKADA COUNTERED WITH HIS JUMP SHOT!!
APPARENTLY IT'S CALLED OKADA BAZOOKA
SAY WHAT?
15 - 15.
RGH!
HE'S FORCING IT FAST AND DEEP...
30 - 15.
HE DECIDED TO INCREASE THE FIREPOWER RATHER THAN CHANGE THE TEMPO.

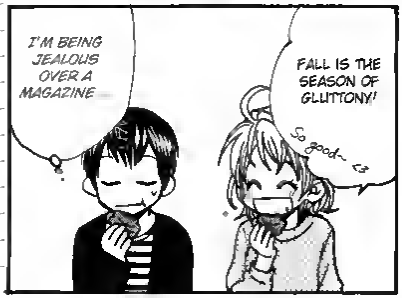

よっ！
OUT.
30 - 30.
BUT THAT'LL LEAD TO EVEN MORE ERRORS.
30 - 40.
A BREAK POINT...

AM I GOING TO DO IT AGAIN...?
DON'T HESI-TATE... DECIDE.
I'LL END UP WITH "I FOLLOWED THROUGH MY STYLE, BUT I COULDN'T WIN." AGAIN...
I CAN'T KEEP PLAYING LIKE THIS...
EVEN THOUGH HE HAS OPTIONS THAT COULD LEAD HIM TO VICTORY...
IF MY OPPONENT REFUSES TO DO WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN,
NO MATTER WHAT HIS REASON IS...
I WON'T LOSE TO SUCH A PERSON!
<TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 22>

Baby Steps 21 Extra







Hi, this is Katsuki.
All-Japan Junior has finally started!
And so from this volume onward, there is one match per day in the story's time frame.

Since 12 / 14 / 16 and under matches happen on different days, people like Coach Minura and Yuuki already finished playing and went back. I've been there for researching a couple times, so I can picture the site pretty well by now. Even the hotel is based on a place that All-Japan Junior players have used in the past. They've been very helpful even when I dropped by at sudden notice.

Although it will depend on whether or not Ei-chan can keep on winning every round, but please have fun with the All-Japan Junior arc for awhile.
Then see you in next volume.